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## **Structuring Naval Special Warfare Junior Officer Professional Military Education**

**26 November 2007**

**by**

**Thomas A. Donovan, LCDR, USN**

Advisors: Erik Jansen, Senior Lecturer, and  
Brian Greenshields, SOCOM Chair

Graduate School of Operational & Information Sciences

**Naval Postgraduate School**

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## Abstract

Naval Special Warfare does not currently have a designated career path for an officer that requires professional military education (PME) for SEAL junior officers after the rank of Ensign (O-1) and before the rank of Lieutenant Commander (O-4). There currently is interest in this subject matter at the Naval Special Warfare Command and Center. SEAL officers increasingly hold key leadership positions and influence critical decisions in the execution of national strategy. This growing responsibility calls for a progressive and sequential education program to prepare junior officers for battle, staff, and command. Additionally, the Naval Special Warfare Officer corps will continue to grow in the coming years, adding more junior officers to the community. SEAL junior officers would benefit from structured PME throughout their careers. Through research analysis and a survey of Naval Special Warfare officers this thesis attempts to determine what education is critical for a SEAL junior officer. Additionally, this thesis attempts to determine the most efficient way to address education shortfalls and the frequency in which education should be experienced. Finally, the Naval Special Warfare junior officer community will benefit from education opportunities inserted into the officer career path to address nineteen specific subjects indicated in this research.

**Keywords:** Naval Special Warfare, Officer, Professional Military Education, Junior Officer Professional Development



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## About the Author

**Lieutenant Commander Thomas A. Donovan**, United States Navy, is a native of Virginia. His military service began in 1992 with his acceptance into the United States Naval Academy. He was commissioned an Ensign in 1996 upon graduation with a Bachelor of Science Degree in History.

LCDR Donovan reported to the Naval Special Warfare Center in Coronado, CA, in June 1996, for Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training. Upon completion, his first assignment was to SEAL Team THREE, where he served as Assistant Officer-in-Charge, ALFA Platoon. His second tour was also with SEAL Team THREE, where he served as Officer-in-Charge, ALFA Platoon. In 2002, he transferred to the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, where he served as a Troop Commander and Operations Officer. In 2006, Lieutenant Commander Donovan reported to Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, where he is currently a student in the Defense Analysis curriculum. His thesis research involves structuring Naval Special Warfare education. His next assignment will be as Executive Officer of an East Coast SEAL Team. His overseas experiences include Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

LCDR Donovan's personal decorations include the Bronze Star with "V" with three gold stars, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with two gold stars, and the Combat Action Ribbon with one gold star.

He is married to the former Michelle Somogyi of Vienna, Virginia. They have three children: Karina 5, Victoria 3, and William 2.



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Disclaimer: The views represented in this report are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy position of the Navy, the Department of Defense, or the Federal Government.



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## Executive Summary

Naval Special Warfare does not have a pipeline for education after Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/s) training and the Junior Officer Training Course (JOTC) normally received as an Ensign (O-1 pay-grade). A survey regarding professional development for SEAL officers was administered to SEAL officers ranging from Ensign (O-1) to Commander (O-5). This survey resulted in a 28% return. From this survey, the researcher concluded that the Naval Special Warfare junior officer community will benefit from education opportunities inserted into the officer career path to address nineteen specific subjects. A mandatory SEAL Lieutenants Career Course (SLCC) for officers aspiring to command a SEAL platoon would address education shortfalls and better prepare a junior officer for command and staff at all levels. This SLCC program would sufficiently address education shortfalls within the mandated primary education window between the ranks of Ensign and Lieutenant. Additionally, the SEAL community would be wise to emphasize and take advantage of all levels of education to include pre-commissioning opportunities, courses of instruction offered by institutions such as the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) and the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in order to maximize SEAL relevancy in accordance with the evolving modern conflict.



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# I. Overview of Naval Special Warfare and the Current Seal Officer Professional Military Education Pipeline

## A. Introduction

The Global War on Terror is taking the US military into both familiar and uncharted waters. Nearly everyday, new challenges arise both on the battlefield and in the staff-room. Officers of all services are gaining levels of combat and staff experiences that rival any other time in our nation's history. Unfortunately, many lessons are being continually relearned, forgotten, ignored or simply dismissed. Timely, relevant education can stop that trend by allowing military members to reflect on past experiences and apply knowledge and thought to future concepts. All organizations should constantly reinforce institutional knowledge concerning their own system, neighboring systems, and competitive systems. In terms of US national policy, it is not sufficient for the Department of Defense (DoD) to exclusively understand itself and the enemy. Progress will be stifled without a sufficient knowledge base that includes adjacent friendly and coalition organizations, enemy and hostile organizations, and (more importantly) how those organizations interact prior to, during, and after battle. Today's Naval Special Warfare (SEAL) Officers are fully engaged in the Global War on Terror—from the tactical level far behind enemy lines to local naval bases, from enlisted sailors to the most senior commands at the strategic level directing joint force employment. Surprisingly, Naval Special Warfare (NSW) does not currently have a progressive and sequential professional military education pipeline to prepare its officers for the future. Such a pipeline would better prepare SEAL officers for combat, command, staff, and senior leadership positions.

## B. Naval Special Warfare Plays an Increasingly Important Role in Modern Strategy, Conflict, and Leadership

Naval Special Warfare Officers are increasingly manning key leadership positions. Ten years ago, many in the SEAL community would never have imagined



a four-star admiral in their ranks. Most recently, as noted by Bottoms and LeBeau (2007) in the Special Operations Command publication *Tip of the Spear*, a SEAL officer was promoted to the rank of Admiral and appointed the eighth Commander of US Special Operations Command. The commander, Admiral Eric Olson, has commanded in nearly every facet of Naval Special Warfare, operated with the United Nations, served in the joint environment and on conventional Navy staffs. Admiral Olson also received a graduate degree from the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, in National Security Affairs. Admiral Olson's rise to lead arguably the most important major command fighting the Global War on Terror demonstrates the contribution of the Naval Special Warfare community; it is now represented at the highest level of military command. US Special Operations Command's mission statement, as seen on the unclassified official SOCOM webpage (2007), describes the enormous responsibility and authority bestowed to Admiral Olson: "USSOCOM leads, plans, synchronizes, and as directed, executes global operations against terrorist networks. USSOCOM trains, organizes, equips and deploys combat ready Special Operations Forces to combatant commands."

In addition to Admiral Olson, SEAL officers serve in various high commands and high-profile positions. The unclassified official Special Operations Command, Europe, Leadership webpage (2007) provides a short biography for the commander of all of the Special Operations forces in Europe and most of Africa. Rear Admiral (Upper Half) William McRaven, also a graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School, commands Special Operations Command, Europe (SOCEUR). SOCEUR's webpage (2007) also highlights Admiral McRaven's extensive responsibilities. SOCEUR, subordinate to the Commander, US European Command, is responsible for "SOF readiness, targeting, exercises, plans, joint and combined training, NATO/partnership activities, and execution of counterterrorism, peacetime and contingency operations." As noted in the Leadership webpage (2007), Admiral McRaven also commanded at every level in Naval Special Warfare, served as the Deputy Commanding General for Operations at the Joint Special Operations Command and at the Office of Combating Terrorism on the National Security



Council. His education has undoubtedly led to his success within the Naval Special Warfare community and the military at large.

Both Olson's and McRaven's positions highlight the fact that Naval Special Warfare officers must be trained and educated in order to command warfighters at every level. According to Admiral McRaven, (1995) “[b]oldness, courage, perseverance, and *intellect* unquestionably have their place in combat, but as the theory shows, they must exist in harmony with the principles of special operation in order to achieve success” (p. 391). Education plays as important a role in an officer's professional development as every other aspect of leadership.

## C. Overview of Naval Special Warfare

### 1. Naval Special Warfare Organization

Naval Special Warfare (NSW) is a dynamic and versatile organization with roots in the United States Navy, yet which currently maintains unequivocal ties to all of the military services. Navy SEALs operate in a joint environment, and are often the first into battle alongside other special operations counterparts. The US Navy Special Warfare unclassified Homepage (2007) describes the basic organization of the Navy SEALs:

NSW provides a versatile, responsive and offensively focused force with continuous overseas presence. The major operational components of Naval Special Warfare Command include Naval Special Warfare Groups ONE and THREE in San Diego, CA, and Naval Special Warfare Groups TWO and FOUR in Norfolk, VA. These components deploy SEAL Teams, SEAL Delivery Vehicle Teams, and Special Boat Teams world wide to meet the training, exercise, contingency and wartime requirements of theater commanders. With approximately 5,400 total active-duty personnel—including 2,450 SEALs and 600 Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen (SWCC)—NSW forces are busier than ever answering "911 calls" from around the globe. (2007)

Given the job description of US Navy SEALs and their supporting personnel under the current global situation, it is no doubt that Naval Special Warfare is busier



than ever. Navy SEALs are currently executing overt and clandestine operations across the globe, and there seems to be no shortage of activity in the near future.

## **2. Naval Special Warfare Missions**

SEAL is an acronym for Sea, Air and Land, describing the environments in which SEALs are trained and equipped to operate. Missions can range from direct combat to information warfare and psychological operations. Today's SEALs not only operate under, on, and near the water, but also high on remote mountains and deep in desolate deserts. SEALs work hand-in-hand with fellow Navy personnel, other US military services, as well as personnel from other government agencies and nations. US Naval Special Warfare's unclassified Missions (2007) webpage describes the missions of the SEAL community:

A tactical force with strategic impact, NSW mission areas include unconventional warfare, direct action, combating terrorism, special reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, information warfare, security assistance, counter-drug operations, personnel recovery and hydrographic reconnaissance. Although NSW personnel comprise less than one percent of US Navy personnel, they offer big dividends on a small investment. (2007)

In this information and media age, it is important for a force such as Naval Special Warfare to maintain the highest standards of training, education, and combat readiness due to the increasing speed in which political and military events unfold. Given the complex and joint nature of modern warfare, Naval Special Warfare leaders must be ready to lead small, clandestine teams in both the most arduous missions and isolated locales; these teams must be equipped to perform in conjunction with the highest levels of national and military strategy and policy. An overview of Naval Special Warfare's recent accomplishments accents the difficult and politically sensitive nature of SEAL operations.

## **3. Naval Special Warfare Modern History**

Since the Navy SEAL Teams were commissioned in 1962, Navy SEALs have operated in every major conflict in which the United States has been involved. Navy SEALs gained their reputation as fierce warriors and adaptive combatants in the



jungles of Vietnam. SEALs have conducted combat operations in conflicts involving Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Desert Shield/Storm, and the Balkans. More recently, as noted in the Naval Special Warfare unclassified History (2007) webpage:

In response to the attacks on America Sept. 11, 2001, Naval Special Warfare forces put operators on the ground in Afghanistan in October. The first military flag officer to set foot in Afghanistan was a Navy SEAL in charge of all special operations for Central Command. Additionally, a Navy SEAL captain commanded Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF) South. Commonly referred to as Task Force K-BAR, the task force included US Navy, Army, Air Force and Coalition SOF forces.

Naval Special Warfare has played a significant role in Operation Iraqi Freedom, employing the largest number of SEALs and SWCC in its history. NSW forces were instrumental in numerous special reconnaissance and direct action missions including the securing of the southern oil infrastructures of the Al Faw peninsula and the off-shore gas and oil terminals; the clearing of the Khawr Abd Allah and Khawr Az Zubayr waterways that enabled humanitarian aid to be delivered to the vital port city of Umm Qasr; reconnaissance of the Shat Al Arab waterway; capture of high value targets, raids on suspected chemical, biological and radiological sites; and the first POW rescue since WWII. Additionally, NSW is also fighting the war on terrorism in other global hot spots including the Philippines and the Horn of Africa.

NSW is committed to combating the global terrorist threats. In addition to being experts in special reconnaissance and direct action missions, the skill sets needed to combat terrorism; NSW is postured to fight a dispersed enemy on their turf. NSW forces can operate from forward-deployed Navy ships, submarines and aviation mobility platforms as well as overseas bases and its own overseas units. (2007)

It is clear that Naval Special Warfare is committed to excellence and service to the nation. SEALs and supporting units are in harm's way on a daily basis, expertly and successfully executing strategically important missions across the globe. A simple question remains: how much more successful could Naval Special Warfare be if its officers subscribed to a progressive, sequential professional military education series?



## D. The Importance of Education in Naval Special Warfare

### 1. SEAL and Special Operations Education Today

The importance of education cannot be overstated. It is assumed that most academics, statesmen, and military leaders would agree that a strong knowledge base is critical to success in any endeavor. From where then, in the Special Operations community, and more specifically within Naval Special Warfare, does that education come? Is education best obtained through a formal school environment or from on-the-job training and experience? The answer is probably somewhere in between. CDR (RET) Brad Voigt, SEAL, USN, Officer Career Management and Skills Development Manager for the Naval Special Warfare Command, Center for SEAL and SWCC, collected unclassified excerpts from Naval Special Warfare After-action Reports (AARs) as one substantiation for this research. These AARs from current Naval Special Warfare combat deployments often describe a lack of officer preparedness when personnel are faced with unfamiliar joint, staff, or liaison (LNO) roles. From these AARs, however, few details of specific shortfalls are provided. Some examples of comments include:

- November 2004: No recurring leadership development training for Officers and Chiefs.
- November 2005: [Task Unit] leaders must be proficient at CO level joint operations.
- April 2006: Without a defined Officer ProDev...

Recommendations, however, are lacking when it comes to addressing problem areas (CDR Voigt, personal correspondence, February 7, 2007). In other words, it appears that officers in the SEAL community recognize the need for and importance of implementing some kind of formal education pipeline. The difficulty arises in determining the true nature of the problem and then how to implement a solution in an already busy and combat-laden career path. This thesis will attempt to provide the Commander, Naval Special Warfare with a solution to this potential impasse.



In addition to this internal frustration, there have been critical comments made by external observers. Perhaps if SEALs emphasized education as much as training, combat readiness, and combat deployments, there would be less room for criticism from outside the community. In an article for *Armed Forces Journal*, Martin N. Murphy (2007) described the desirability of and challenges posed to a US naval civil affairs and counterinsurgency force. Murphy provided interesting insight into the benefits of such a specially trained force, and accurately points out the possible integration of Naval Special Warfare. Murphy, however, failed to capture the essence of the SEAL mission. He asserts:

[Counterinsurgency] is not a SEAL mission. [SEALs] have evolved in a different direction. They are warriors, trained and equipped to conduct covert insertion reconnaissance and sabotage missions. Their young age profile means that in most cases they lack the maturity needed to be effective in the ambiguous world of long-term unconventional warfare. (2007, p. 22)

As the Naval Special Warfare Community Manager Commander Paul Giberson notes, the actual average age of an enlisted SEAL is 32. SEAL enlisted personnel are also exceptionally educated. In fact, over 16% of SEAL enlisted operators have advanced education with at least an associate's degree (CDR Giberson, personal correspondence, September 11, 2007). Additionally, nearly all SEALs now have combat experience. Why, then, would Murphy suggest SEAL officers and enlisted are not the right force for counterinsurgency? Though counterinsurgency should not be a mission solely for SEALs, it is most certainly within the SEAL mission set and capability. Some would argue that there are none more qualified in the Navy. How then, does Naval Special Warfare educate SEAL officers in counterinsurgency and other forms of asymmetric warfare? How can Martin Murphy be convinced that SEALs are, and have been, up to the counterinsurgency task? The answer is education.

Understanding the scope of military education requirements is a substantial task in and of itself. Organizational design experts Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal (2003) comment on the energy involved in self- evaluation: “[a]ssessing the performance or productivity of individuals, departments, or programs is a major



undertaking. Evaluation consumes substantial time, effort, and money" (p. 281). So, rather than spend time arguing against Martin N. Murphy and his article, the Naval Special Warfare community should be in a constant state of self-evaluation in order to determine the best and most efficient way to combat an elusive, transnational enemy. Luckily, the SEAL community places stock in future challenges and not in past successes. Indeed, lessons learned, both positive and negative, help shape the force of tomorrow. So, too, then should lessons learned apply to education. Is the SEAL community educating its officers adequately and properly? The only way to answer that question is to execute what Bolman and Deal (2003) refer to as a major undertaking and continue the exercise of internal evaluation.

The current Chairman Joint Chief of Staff, Admiral Mullen (2006), when serving as the Chief of Naval Operations, remarked on the importance of a time for education in an officer's career path. At the Naval War College in Newport, RI, Admiral Mullen stated:

[The Naval War College] is a place—an environment, really—that permits military officers the time to think and read about the past and future. Time to plan, time to write, and time to prepare themselves for higher responsibilities which will come very rapidly. (2006)

As Admiral Mullen takes the helm as the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, his sage advice echoes the criticality of officer education at any level. Especially considering the high operations tempo that nearly all junior officers in any service maintain, Admiral Mullen stresses the importance of professional reflection and a time for learning and critical analysis on conducting the operational art of war.

## **2. The Joint Special Operations University Educational Requirements Analysis**

The Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) is the education component of the Special Operations Command. According to JSOU's unclassified official webpage (2007), its mission is to:



[E]ducate Special Operations Forces executive, senior, and intermediate leaders and selected other national and international security decision-makers, both military and civilian, through teaching, research, and outreach in the science and art of Joint Special Operations. (2007)

As part of JSOU's educational refinement, Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc., (2005) submitted an exceptionally detailed and enlightening report to the Joint Special Operations University in Hurlburt, Florida, in order to evaluate the SOF education process. The Executive Summary (2005) captured the central purpose and themes of the study: "This study [focused] on the education component of those USSOCOM responsibilities and the changes that should be made in joint SOF education to prepare SOF personnel at every level to face the challenges of the post-9/11 world" (2005, p. 1).

The report "is the result of an independent study by Booz Allen Hamilton and identifies the general educational themes and processes necessary for the joint SOF community to succeed in the face of global challenges" (2005, p. 1). The methodology of the study included both interviews and a survey of SOF personnel. "The survey targeted active and retired mid- to senior-level SOF leaders, as well as current and former JSOU students. A total of 1,167 respondents returned surveys" (2005, p. 4). Many of the findings by the independent study mirror educational issues within this thesis research. It appears that Naval Special Warfare is not the only SOF component that is conducting internal assessments of educational needs, requirements, and future goals.

The JSOU report indicated that the SOF community relies on service schools to professionally educate its officer corps. Special Operations Command does, in fact, control forces from all four of the major services, but each service maintains career-specific requirements for promotion. "In the area of professional education, that meant a reliance on Service and joint professional military education (PME) opportunities designed for traditional Service career development and promotion profiles, with only limited alternatives being provided by USSOCOM" (Booz Allen Hamilton, 2005, p. 2). Despite the fact that USSOCOM does not have its own



service-school equivalent, and that most of the service schools are not SOF specific, Special Operations Forces continue to perform on the battlefield in an extraordinarily manner:

Data collection revealed near-universal agreement across the joint SOF community that the current joint SOF is exceptionally well trained in individual and organizational skills. However, the study also determined that the same force is not well prepared for integrated planning or force application at the operational and strategic levels of warfare. (2005, p. 2)

The SOF community executes well, but could be better prepared to understand the impacts of operations and how to better shape future operations. Perhaps a better-prepared force would exceed current expectations, goals, and requirements.

## E. The Current Education System for SEAL Junior Officers

### 1. **SEAL Junior Officer Training Course (JOTC)**

Naval Special Warfare junior officers currently attend the SEAL Junior Officer Training Course (JOTC) after completing Basic Underwater Demolition SEAL (BUD/s) school. As stated in a Naval Special Warfare Training Course Control document (2006, March), the JOTC course “is designed to prepare NSW Junior Officers with the knowledge and skills to more effectively fulfill their prospective positions within the SEAL community” (2006, p. 2). The stated focus of knowledge “within” the SEAL community is deficient. Not only must officers intimately know their profession, they are expected to be familiar with the joint environment. The Department of Defense and the joint agency arena expect officers to be masters of their profession and to carry an understanding of other military and civilian entities, even at the most junior positions. At the primary education level described by the *Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 1800.01C* (2005), primary education should be experienced through the ranks of O-3 and include tactical and operational instruction. JOTC, however, is the only formal block of instruction in Naval Special Warfare at the time of this writing. As per the *CJCSC Instruction 1800.01C* (2005), SEAL Ensigns (O-1’s) through Lieutenants (O-3’s) are expected to have awareness



in Joint Warfare Fundamentals and Joint Campaigning, as well as be tactical experts in their branch fields. The JOTC syllabus (2005) suggests many key subject areas receive minimal attention:

- USSOCOM History and Organization: 30 minutes
- Agencies: 1.5 hours
- Joint Special Operations Command and Control: 1.5 hours
- Military Decision-making Process: 1.5 hours
- Support and Coordination Planning: 1.5 hours

Though JOTC is designed as an introduction into Special Operations, for many SEAL officers, these single hour-and-a-half formal blocks of instruction are the only such blocks officers receive until they complete the required JPME-1 at the O-4 pay-grade—which could come as late as the twelve- or fourteen-year mark in an officer’s career. However, as an officer progresses from Ensign to Lieutenant Commander, he/she will undoubtedly tap into this type of information time and time again, regardless of his/her assignment within or external to the Special Operations community. What is missing in the SEAL officer career path is a period of instruction to refocus and reaffirm the principles of Naval Special Warfare, modern Special Operations, and the joint and inter-agency environment. Such instruction must occur when junior officers are executing Special Operations in support of national objectives and strategy. The best time for such a period for a SEAL lieutenant (O-3) would be prior to taking command of a SEAL platoon. This continuum would give the SEAL officer both the Junior Officer Training Course (JOTC) and at least one overseas deployment in order to gain critical on-the-job training and experiences. Such a timeline would result in a solid Special Operations base of knowledge prior to a SEAL O-3 primary level school. At this time in an officer’s career, he would have had time to digest the lessons of JOTC and see those principles in real-world environments. This perspective would heighten the value of any follow-on curriculum and better prepare that officer for tactical command, staff, and liaison duties.

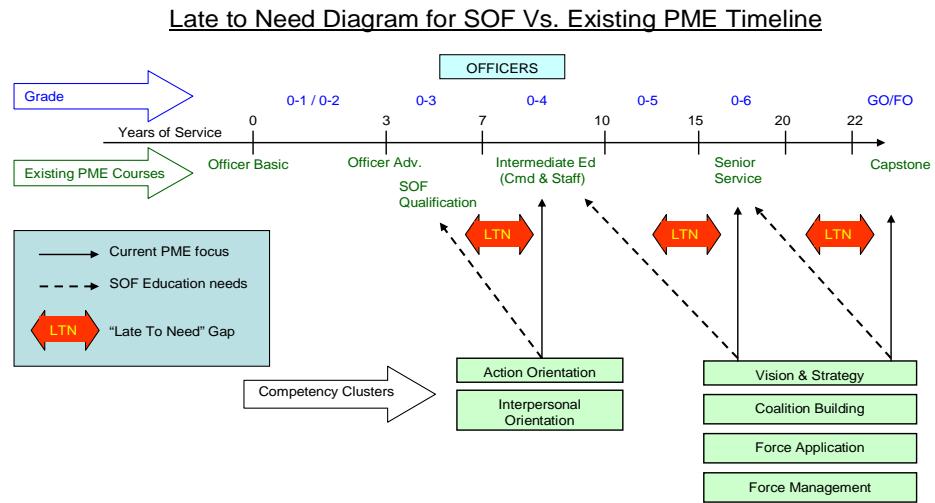


The current SEAL officer education continuum dictates that officers receive education at the earliest stages—through JOTC. After JOTC, a SEAL officer is not required to attend any educational institution or complete any educational requirements until the rank of Lieutenant Commander (O-4), at which point an officer is directed to fulfill the JPME-1 requirement. The JSOU main report (Booz Allen Hamilton, 2005) highlighted similar concerns about education preparedness throughout the entire Special Operations community. Finding number Eight indicates that any education, regardless of SOF application, can often come too late:

When SOF leaders were asked to comment on their SOF education and experiences, the first theme to emerge was that more and earlier joint, interagency, and multinational education should be available and that the education should be timed to precede key assignments in which those competencies would be necessary. The major issue, as expressed by study participants, was that primary PME for officers and enlisted personnel is scheduled against Service career progression models. Consequently, relevant PME topics for SOF leaders are often available too late in their careers. (2005, p. 38)

As in the Naval Special Warfare community, educational opportunities tend to come much later in an SOF Officer's career path; yet, most tactical action—with often operational and strategic implications—happens at relatively junior ranks. A key line from the above JSOU finding reads, “education should be timed to precede key assignments in which those competencies would be necessary” (2005, p. 38). While JOTC prepares SEAL officers for entry-level roles and responsibilities, it is not sufficient to prepare officers for an assignment as a SEAL Platoon Commander (Lieutenant, O-3) operating in a joint and coalition environment. The JSOU report captures a similar problem set in the “Late to Need” diagram below:





**Figure 1. “Late to Need” Diagram, JSOU Report**  
(Booz Allen Hamilton, 2005, p. 39)

The “Late to Need” diagram illustrates the fact the service schools usually come too late, considering the roles and responsibilities of junior officers on the modern battlefield. In essence, the problem with the current service-wide professional military education system is that it is not SOF-specific. Additionally, the education, even though not related to SOF, is coming too late in an officer’s career path in view of the duties and responsibilities exhibited in junior officer ranks. A major difference between the Naval Special Warfare officer education path and that illustrated in the “Late to Need” diagram, however, is that both the CJCSC 1800.01C and the JSOU report assume a service school will be offered during the O-3 pay grade. This is accurate for the Army’s Captain’s Career Course, the US Marine’s Expeditionary Warfare School, and the Air Force’s Squadron Officer School. SEAL officers, however, are not required to attend such a school, nor does one specifically exist.

Regardless of the fact that service schools appear too late and are not SOF specific, for the other services, the O-3 schooling at least provides a common ground for officers prior to their advancing to grades normally associated with mid- to higher-level command and staff. SEALs are not required to attend such a school or



institution for advancement or general knowledge. Some SEAL officers will pursue advanced degrees on their own; some will successfully complete JPME requirements on-line; and a few officers will attend the Naval Postgraduate School relatively early in their careers. However, these options appear to be the exception, not the rule. A majority of SEAL officers will not have attended a service school of any kind at the O-3 level—either resident, on-line, or through distance learning. This fact indicates that after the Junior Officer Training Course, unless education is pursued at an individual level, all other education will be obtained be “on the job” until a SEAL officer completes the required block of JPME-1. This situation is unacceptable given the nature of the current conflict, and considering the complex threats that the United States faces daily. A need and requirement exists to address the lack of education for SEAL junior officers operating in the global arena.

## **2. Current SEAL Platoon Leadership Seminar**

Naval Special Warfare currently offers a one-week SEAL Platoon Leadership Seminar of instruction taught at the Naval Special Warfare Center. This course is mainly designed to allow some senior leaders to impart values and lessons learned to SEAL junior officers preparing to take command of a SEAL platoon. While this course is a step in the right direction, it is not designed or able to educate a junior officer in the complex requirements of the modern battlefield. A review of the one-week syllabus (Naval Special Warfare Center, 2007, March) quickly demonstrates that crucial areas associated with a modern warfighter are not covered, nor could be in such a short period of time. This current structure, however, could easily be incorporated into a longer, more in-depth program to better educate SEAL junior officers.

A SEAL junior officer must be systematically and professionally prepared in order to execute the roles and responsibilities expected in staff and command on the battle field of today. A program must be created to address shortfalls in officer education. Prior to that programs creation, however, those areas of improvement must be clearly identified so the right solutions can be implemented. The following



chapter will focus on the SEAL officer survey in order to specifically identify areas that SEAL officers feel need attention.

## II. SEAL Officer Professional Military Education Survey Methods and Results

### A. The Importance of Organizational Self-evaluation

#### 1. The Need for Change

It is safe to say that the Special Operations community has been regularly engaged in the Global War on Terror since September 11, 2001. Tactics, techniques, and procedures have matured, been validated, adjusted, and combat-tested again and again. Forces have grown, and special operations leaders are increasingly called upon for critical analysis of national and military strategy. There appears to be a constant global spotlight on special operations leaders in various roles. The attacks on September 11th caused a period of forced change in the Special Operations community; they catalyzed a reanalysis of how business was, is, and will be conducted. Organizational analysts Bolman and Deal (2003) reflect on the requirement for modernization during times of change. “It seems simplistic to point out that investment in change calls for collateral investment in training. Yet countless initiatives falter because managers neglect to spend time and money on developing necessary new knowledge and skills” (2003, p. 370).

As Bolman and Deal point out, education is not simply a good idea; education is mission-critical.

An environment filled with complexity, surprise, deception, and ambiguity makes it hard to extract lessons for future action. Yet an increasingly turbulent, rapidly shifting environment requires contemporary organizations to learn better and faster just to survive. (2003, p. 27)

This description of the environment can easily be seen through the lens of the asymmetric conflict in which the US military is currently involved. Therefore, the



Naval Special Warfare community must learn faster and better than our enemies, or there will be a heavy price to pay on the battlefield.

Special operations officers are often responsible for significant amounts of equipment, funding, and extremely well-trained personnel. Therefore, there is a heavy reliance on the institutions and individuals responsible for training and educating the officer and the operator. In the SOF community, the line between officer and operator is never as transparent as in the ranks of junior officers. Navy SEALs are not an exception.

## B. Education as a System

### 1. An Insurgency Model as an Example

Enemies of the United States are assumed to be conducting training and education to determine the best ways to circumvent US military power. There is usefulness in comparing the educational system of an insurgency to that of our modern professional officers' career path. In a RAND study titled *Rebellion and Authority*, Nathan Leites and Charles Wolf, Jr. (1970) describe an insurgency as a system. The 3<sup>rd</sup> step in the insurgent system is a conversion mechanism in which the rebellion "tends to organize personnel, financial, logistics, intelligence, communications, and operations branches to manage the conversion of inputs into activities" (1970, pp. 34-35). According to the system, in order to achieve success, the insurgency must have a plan that includes the transformation and adaptation of raw materials into effective outputs to further the cause. In Leites and Wolf's (1970) example, the personnel identified for insurgent activity are the raw materials. For the insurgent, there is a requirement for economy of force since resources may be fleeting. If the enemy is transforming and adapting according to the modern situation, so then should the Naval Special Warfare community.

Naval Special Warfare could take a similar approach to the educational system for officers. More of the right education is better than simply more education. In a time of high operational tempo, it is important that leaders afford junior officers



the opportunities to reflect on lessons learned in the field, share those ideas with peers and academic or subject-matter experts, contemplate new and inspiring ways to tackle future conflicts, and then return to the field with fresh and innovative perspectives. One of the purposes of the SEAL officer survey was to determine what facets of education are currently the most important in regards to the modern conflict. Critical thinking and innovation has always been a SOF hallmark. Instilling and fostering that trait early in a SEAL officer's career path can be accomplished through education.

## **2. Training and Experience versus Education**

Commander Matt Stevens (2007) recently wrote a master's thesis at the Marine Corps University, Command and Staff College, entitled *The Missing Link: Professional Military Education in the Navy SEAL Officer Corps*. Commander Stevens offers a multitude of recommendations to address the shortfalls in Naval Special Warfare professional military education. He makes a distinction between training and education that is often misunderstood by senior military leaders and is worth noting. He explains:

In essence, training is more concerned with teaching a person or unit *what* to think, *what* to do and *how* to do it. Training is skill oriented and *reflexive*. Shooting a weapon or running a battle-staff are products of training. Education, on the other hand, is *reflective* and emphasizes *how to think*. (2007, pp. 4-5)

Understanding the value of operational experience, leadership must measure education by its enhancement of that experience. As the idiom goes, you don't know what you don't know.

Most SEAL officers that participated in the SEAL officer survey indicated that a majority of their education and training had been through on-the-job experiences. While there is merit to learning in an operating environment, initial training and education in the form of BUD/S, and JOTC are required before becoming a qualified SEAL officer. Subsequently, there should similar attention given to education requirements as an officer is promoted through the military ranks. As rank and



responsibility increases, so does the complexity of the operational environment. Therefore, more time is required to prepare for often ambiguous and complicated tasks and situations. Again, the JSOU main report (2005) focused on the heart of this issue. Finding number 21 reported:

Although operational experience (a component of applied learning) can be an effective teacher, many expressed the belief that reliance on it exclusively was inefficient in developing critical competencies and led to longer ramp-up times in educating joint SOF leaders. This exclusive dependence on operational experience leaves individuals to rely on trial and error and places additional burdens on field commanders. (2005, p. 58)

The JSOU report (2005) Finding number 24 continued to highlight the reliance on the SOF community to concurrently learn while executing operations:

According to a large majority of stakeholder interviews and focus group engagements, current joint SOF leadership has not been specifically educated to fight the GWOT. Rather, it continues to rely on its traditional strength of adapting to operational challenges and learning informally on-the-job. (2005, p. 61)

The SOF community, and specifically Naval Special Warfare, should take advantage of time and institutions to train and educate personnel prior to an emersion into the deployed environment. Another option would be to create a SEAL Lieutenants Career Course to address shortfalls. This would cut back on the time required to “learn” the job, as well as limit the loss of operational momentum usually associated with military turnover. SEAL officers new to a job, position, or staff often need time to gain situational awareness and knowledge of the operating environment. Much of this time could be cut down if the SEAL officer already had more institutional knowledge.

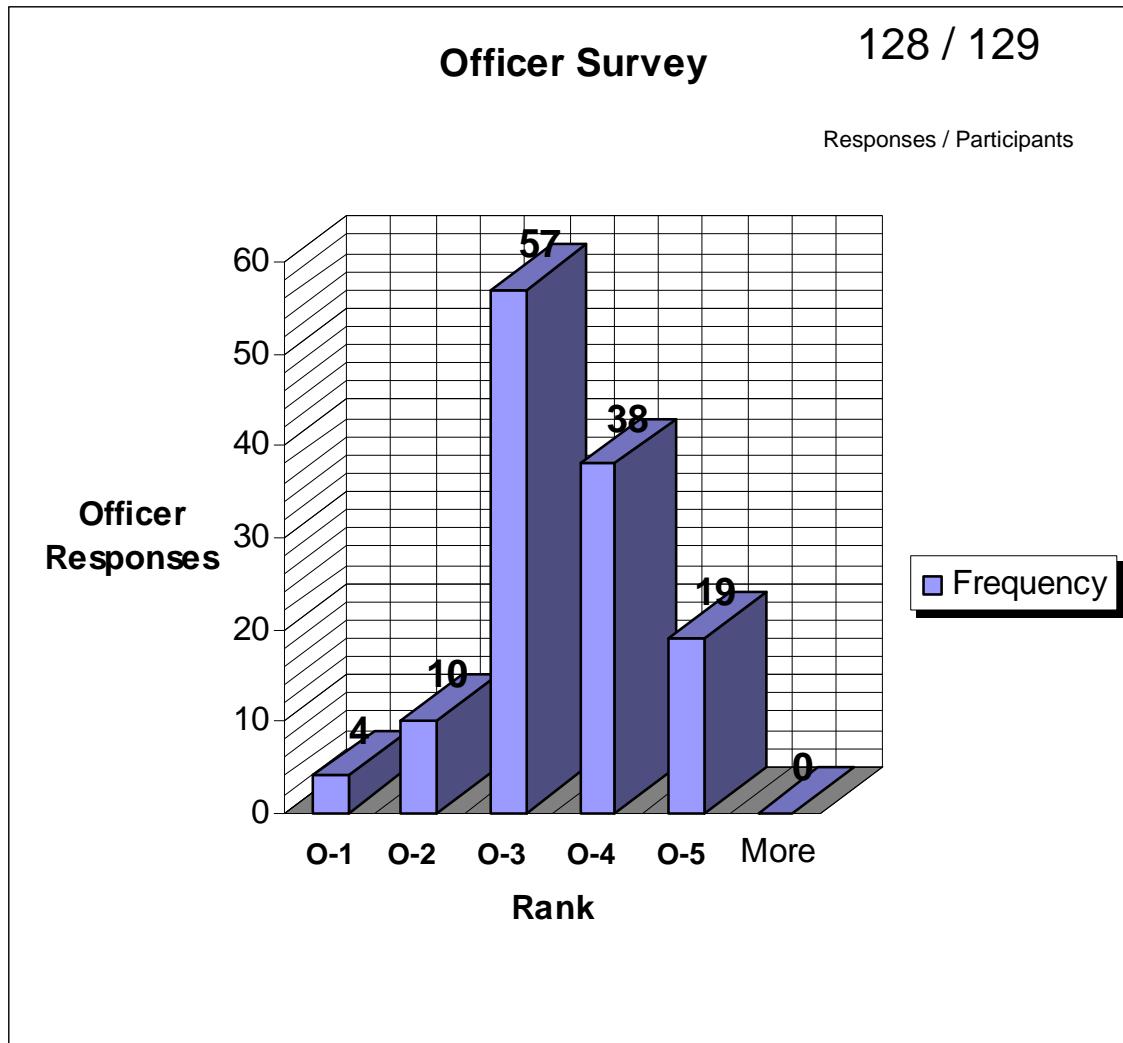


## C. Naval Special Warfare Survey Participants and Information-gathering Methods

### 1. Participants

The SEAL officer professional military education survey (See Appendix 1) was conducted with the Naval Special Warfare Center for SEAL and SWCC to obtain information regarding Naval Special Warfare education and training. Appendix 1 contains a copy of the survey, with minor changes to better match the format of the on-line, paper, and electronic version. Through the Naval Special Warfare Command, a standard Navy message (See Appendix 2) was forwarded to all SEAL commands announcing the voluntary survey. The survey was open to all SEAL officers between and including the ranks of Ensign (O-1) to Commander (O-5). In addition to dispersing the official message, the author traveled to SEAL commands in Hawaii, San Diego, and Virginia to administer a paper copy of the survey. In addition, the Center for SEAL and SWCC sent an e-mail to the community leadership toward the end of the survey window (24 May, 2007 to 31 July, 2007) as a reminder that the survey was still available. During the survey window, there were a total of 129 responses out of 450 possible SEAL officers between the ranks of O-1 and O-5 (See Figure 2). That return represented a 28% sample of the total SEAL officer population between the ranks of Ensign (O-1) and Commander (O-5). SEAL officers offered frank and honest opinions regarding professional military education and training and were enthusiastic about the study. Support from the Naval Special Warfare Command and the Naval Special Warfare Center aided in the substantial return of surveys.





**Figure 2. Naval Special Warfare Officer Survey Participants by Rank**

Participants included those willing to take the survey. This generally includes those not currently deployed to a combat theater, those stationed where they would receive regular official message traffic, and those not on temporary duty during the time of command visits by the author. Every effort was made to make the survey known and available to all SEAL officers between O-1 and O-5. Participants represented a clear cross-section of the community, with a greater percentage of the respondents coming from the O-3 to O-5 ranks.



## 2. Data Collection Methods and Survey Design

Three methods for taking the SEAL Officer Professional Development survey were available. First, participants could log onto the Center for SEAL and SWCC secure web-page and take an on-line version. Second, an e-mail version was available to SEALs in remote locations or to those that did not have access to the Center for SEAL and SWCC secure web-page. E-mailed versions were sent either to CDR (RET) Brad Voigt USN, the director of the Center for SEAL and SWCC, or to the author, LCDR Thomas Donovan. Third, the final method of participation was through a paper version of the survey administered by the author at various SEAL commands on predetermined dates. 63 responses came on-line, 38 via e-mail, and 32 from the paper version. Six surveys came in after the window and were not included in the data analysis.

The SEAL officer survey asked a series of questions, with responses composed of a five-point scale that included Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree or Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Subjects were broken into four major domains. The first domain contained subjects of a tactical nature, which included mission planning. This domain also included questions regarding tactical skill-sets that asked how training was obtained: either on-the-job (OJT) or formally. A five choice response set was used, ranging from 100% OJT, 75% OJT/25% Formal, 50% OJT/50% Formal, 25% OJT/75% Formal, or 100% Formal. For purposes of analysis, answers to these questions were coded as a five point scale. The second domain focused on educational topics using only the five-point Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree scale. The third domain comprised three “short answer” questions asking the participants to comment on areas related to SEAL officer education, training, and preparedness. The fourth domain repeated domains one and two, without the OJT - Formal sub-question. This final domain asked SEAL Lieutenant Commanders (O-4's) and Commanders (O-5's) to evaluate the officers under their command in the same skill sets and educational attributes as domains one and two. The survey took roughly 30 minutes to complete.



Every effort was made to accurately transfer data from written and e-mailed surveys into the web based survey data set. Additionally, the transfer of the final data set to MINITAB (1998) for analysis was reviewed and scrutinized to limit possible error.<sup>1</sup>

Results of the survey were collected and compiled by the staff at the Center for SEAL and SWCC under the direction of CDR (RET) Brad Voigt. The compiled data were then sent to the author for analysis.

The only demographic used for the SEAL officer survey was an individual's rank. Rank was considered to be the best way to break out the significance of specific subjects in relation to an officer's time within Naval Special Warfare. Additionally, rank as the single demographic eliminated some complexities in analyzing themes across the Naval Special Warfare junior officer spectrum.

Questions one through 22 were open to all SEAL officers between the ranks of O-1 and O-5 and had a possible 129 responses. Questions 23a through 24o focused on SEAL O-4's and O-5's and had 57 possible responses. Omitted from the below results table are the written responses in questions 19-21.

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<sup>1</sup> On one occasion, for only the on-line version of the survey, an instruction line in the heading of questions 18a through 18k was reversed. Specifically, "strongly agree" was incorrectly indicated to respond with a 1, and conversely "strongly disagree" with a 5. This heading instruction, however, was checked by the fact that the actual responses for each question (18a through 18k) were followed by the correct answer scale both in number and word form: "strongly agree" with a 5, through "strongly disagree" with a 1. It seemed highly unlikely to the student and the advisor that subjects would ignore the clearly labeled scale on the screen in favor of their memory of an instruction in a previous heading. This belief seemed confirmed when the researcher discussed the issue with three survey participants who had noted the discrepancy; all of these participants answered according to the correct scale. Furthermore, the discrepancy was noted and corrected within the first two weeks of the survey window. It also only appeared in the on-line version. Given the fact that the survey discrepancy existed for a short time, was only in the heading and not in the actual response location, was only in the on-line version, and the actual response locations were of the correct scale and correctly interpreted by at least three participants, the error is considered to have had a negligible impact on the results. In addition, the SEAL officer survey results parallel those of the JSOU (2005) survey. The researcher and his advisor maintain the strongest confidence in the survey results and analysis.

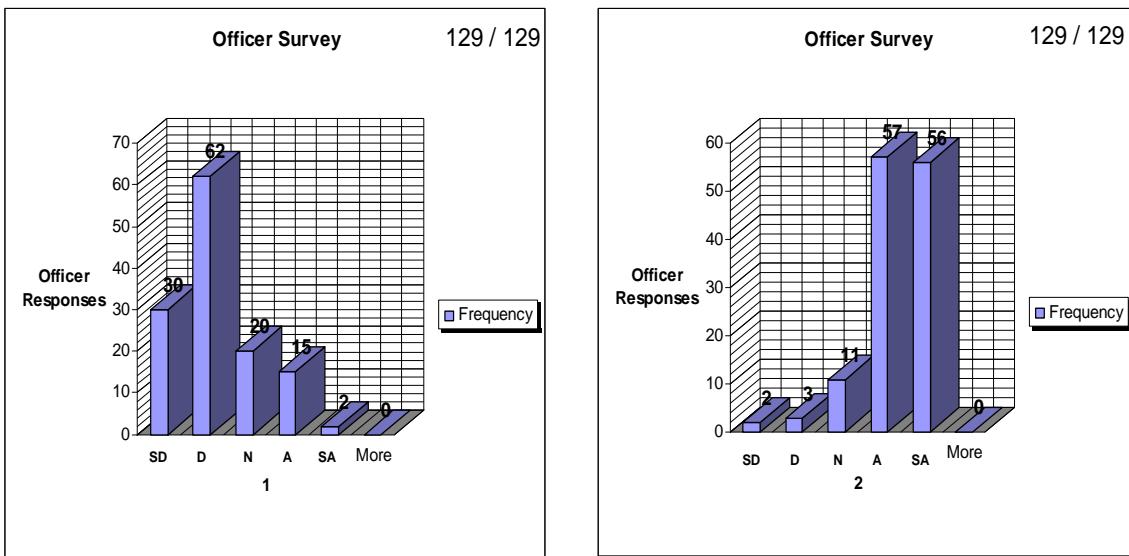


The SEAL officer survey was approved by the Naval Postgraduate School's (NPS) Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protection of Human Subjects (as seen in Appendix 3).

#### D. Survey Results

The SEAL officer survey clearly demonstrated operational issues within the Naval Special Warfare Community that would benefit from more professional education. First and foremost, when asked how training and education was received, most SEAL officers (regardless of rank) overwhelmingly responded that on-the-job training was the primary source of instruction. This is an important observation considering that SEAL officers have varying and distinct career paths. It would be hard to determine which officers learned what, during which experience, and from whom? For example, a Lieutenant (O-3) operations officer with staff experience in the Philippines would have different "on-the-job" training and education than that of a Lieutenant (O-3) operations officer in Iraq. Likewise, if these two were compared to a non-deploying operations officer, all three would have different lessons learned and experiences to pass on to junior officers later in their careers. The end result is that officers have on-the-job experiences that apply to specific scenarios, but those experiences may be less useful when the officer is presented with different circumstances. Figure 3 indicates that much of what a SEAL officer learns today comes from on-the-job experience vice formal education and training.





Most of my SEAL education and training has been in a formal school-house environment.

Most of my SEAL education and experience has been on-the-job training (OJT).

**Figure 3. Formal versus On-the-job Training among Naval Special Warfare Officers O-1 through O-5**

### 1. Rank Analysis

The data analysis was conducted using MINITAB software (release 12, The student edition of MINITAB for Windows software, 1998). Additionally, basic statistics were also derived using MINITAB. Respondents were authorized to skip questions.

Table 1 (also seen in Appendix 2) presents the basic statistical analysis from the SEAL officer survey. For each item, measures of central tendency – the Mean, Median, and Mode – are presented, along with a measure of dispersion – the standard deviation. In addition, the  $p$  value resulting from a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with Rank as the independent variable is presented. Relationships according to rank were considered significant using  $\alpha = 0.10$  if mean differences among rank were significantly different at  $p < 0.10$  level. Highlighted are the  $p$ -values  $< 0.10$ :



Question Number	Response out of 129	Standard				
		Mean	Median	Mode	Deviation	P-Value <sup>2</sup>
1	129	2.2016	2	2	0.9793	0.556
2	129	4.2558	4	4	0.8318	0.934
3	129	4.4651	5	5	0.5869	0.785
3a	129	3.876	4	4	0.9763	0.332
3b	128	3.5859	4	4	0.9351	0.358
4	128	3.8984	4	4	1.0487	0.791
4a	129	3.8372	4	4	0.8731	0.059
4b	129	3.1705	3	3	0.7616	0.043
5	126	4.1587	4	4	0.7737	0.395
5a	129	4.0388	4	4	0.922	0.156
5b	127	3.5039	4	4	0.7546	0.464
6	124	3.6935	4	4	0.9892	0.076
6a	125	4.248	5	5	0.9559	0.071
6b	126	3.3651	3	3	0.7332	0.534
7	127	2.976	3	2	1.172	0.657
7a	127	4.6457	5	5	0.7403	0.145
7b	127	3.2126	3	3	0.752	0.917
8	127	3.102	3	4	1.194	0.515
8a	129	4.7132	5	5	0.7725	0.168
8b	129	3.2558	3	3	0.8128	0.819
9	127	3.7559	4	4	1.0135	0.305
9a	129	4.0775	4	5	0.9405	0.172
9b	129	3.0388	3	3	0.7438	0.09
10	127	3.1575	3	4	1.1228	0.196
10a	129	4.2868	5	5	0.9202	0.473
10b	129	3	3	3	0.75	0.408
11	126	3.167	3	4	1.178	0.242
11a	127	4.7165	5	5	0.6286	0.14
11b	127	3.4488	3	3	0.6867	0.104
12	126	2.754	3	2	1.288	0.231

<sup>2</sup> p-values < 0.10 are highlighted



12a	126	4.4841	5	5	0.9528	0.026
12b	127	3.2047	3	3	0.6707	1
13	127	3.3386	4	4	1.1071	0.4
13a	129	3.9922	4	5	1.0193	0.003
13b	129	3.2016	3	3	0.7539	0.079
14	127	3.5512	4	4	1.0962	0.482
14a	128	4.0469	4	5	1.093	0.12
14b	128	3.4766	4	4	0.763	0.313
15	127	3.504	4	4	1.154	0.162
15a	125	4.256	5	5	0.9747	0.672
15b	127	3.4567	3	4	0.71	0.224
16	126	3.524	4	4	1.15	0.753
16a	127	4.4173	5	5	0.8493	0.14
16b	127	3.378	3	3	0.7119	0.055
17	127	3.134	3	4	1.164	0.489
17a	127	4.3228	5	5	1.0303	0.003
17b	127	3.1654	3	3	0.6757	0.321
18a	129	3.3643	4	4	1.1315	0.995
18b	129	3.2946	3	4	1.0854	0.816
18c	129	3.6047	4	4	1.0564	0.22
18d	129	2.5659	3	2	1.0595	0.691
18e	129	2.4651	2	2	1.0387	0.763
18f	129	3.535	4	4	1.139	0.752
18g	128	3.117	3	4	1.195	0.055
18h	129	2.969	3	2	1.218	0.014
18i	129	2.953	3	4	1.198	0.022
18j	129	3.5039	4	4	1.0087	0.627
18k	128	2.5859	3	3	1.1261	0.404
22	126	2.8095	3	3	0.8071	0.25
23a	55	2.964	3	4	1.071	0.732
23b	55	2.945	3	3	1.026	0.778
23c	55	3.527	4	4	1.136	0.462
23d	55	2.309	2	2	0.92	0.732
23e	55	2.091	2	2	0.888	0.473



23f	53	3.113	3	4	0.934	0.751
23g	55	2.618	3	2	1.009	0.079
23h	55	2.345	2	2	1.004	0.336
23i	53	2.453	2	2	1.011	0.601
23j	55	3.018	3	3	0.991	0.452
23k	55	2.182	2	2	0.884	0.886
24a	55	4.4	5	5	0.83	0.249
24b	55	4.036	4	4	0.942	0.111
24c	55	4.273	4	4	0.781	0.514
24d	54	3.87	4	4	0.891	0.644
24e	55	3.182	3	3	1.02	0.672
24f	54	2.907	3	3	1.033	0.836
24g	55	3.364	3	4	1.025	0.568
24h	53	2.943	3	4	1.008	0.773
24i	55	3	3	3	0.981	0.776
24j	54	2.611	3	3	0.998	0.65
24k	55	3.273	4	4	0.99	0.607
24l	54	3.611	4	4	0.92	0.671
24m	54	3.796	4	4	0.898	0.367
24n	55	3.473	4	4	1.034	0.783
24o	55	2.945	3	3	1.044	0.781

**Table 1. Measures of Central Tendency and t-Test Results for the Naval Special Warfare Officer Survey**

Question 22 asked: if a formal block of instruction were to be added to a SEAL officer's career, about how long should it be? Answers ranged from "not required" to "five to six months." The vast majority of respondents indicated that a one- to two-month course would be sufficient.

Questions 4(a and b) and 13(a and b) had  $p$ -value < 0.10. This indicates that in all four subjects (4a, 4b, 13a, and 13b) rank was significantly related to the responses. Question 4 asked about preparedness of officers regarding mission planning at the platoon level. Question 13 asked about preparedness for fire support coordination and execution. Given the nature of these subjects, it quickly



becomes evident that senior officers feel more prepared in areas that are usually experienced during mid-level career positions. In the case of Question 4a and 4b, what is interesting is the fact that more senior officers thought that they learned mission planning on-the-job vice in a formal setting. The median for Question 4a was 4, while the median for 4b was 3. The one-way ANOVA analysis, however, of 4b indicates that more senior officers believe that on-the-job is, in fact, an adequate way to learn that skill set. The one-way ANOVA analysis speaks for itself:

Analysis of Variance for 4a					
Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Rank	4	6.835	1.709	2.33	0.059
Error	123	90.040	0.732		
Total	127	96.875			
Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on Pooled StDev					
Level	N	Mean	StDev	-----+-----+-----	
1	4	4.0000	1.4142	(-----*-----)	
2	10	3.6000	1.0750	(-----*-----)	
3	57	3.7193	0.9956	(--*---)	
4	38	3.8158	0.5626	(---*---)	
5	19	4.3684	0.5973	(-----*-----)	
-----+-----+-----					
Pooled StDev =		0.8556		3.50	4.00
				4.50	

**Table 2. SEAL Officer Survey One-way Variance for Question 4A**

Analysis of Variance for 4b					
Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Rank	4	5.684	1.421	2.55	0.043
Error	123	68.535	0.557		
Total	127	74.219			
Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on Pooled StDev					
Level	N	Mean	StDev	-----+-----+-----	
1	4	4.0000	0.0000	(-----*-----)	
2	10	3.5000	0.5270	(-----*-----)	
3	57	3.0702	0.8207	(--*--)	
4	38	3.2632	0.6851	(---*---)	
5	19	2.9474	0.7799	(-----*-----)	
-----+-----+-----					
Pooled StDev =		0.7465		3.00	3.60
				4.20	

**Table 3. SEAL Officer Survey One-way Variance for Question 4B**

Question 13(a and b) has similar results to Question 4(a and b). Although the median indicates that more formal training is desired, more senior officers felt that on-the-job training was nearly as important. This result could be probably tied to



senior officers having more experience in mission planning and fire support coordination and execution. Having learned this way, senior officers most likely believe that is an adequate way to master that skill-set.

Question 6 asked about an officer's preparedness regarding tactical employment of Naval Special Warfare Task Unit (NSWTU) Assets. In this subject, rank clearly was a factor:

Analysis of Variance for 6					
Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Rank	4	8.232	2.058	2.18	0.076
Error	118	111.638	0.946		
Total	122	119.870			
Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on Pooled StDev					
Level	N	Mean	StDev	-----+-----+-----+-----	-----+-----+-----+-----
1	4	3.7500	0.9574	(-----*-----)	(-----*-----)
2	10	3.7000	0.6749	(-----*-----)	(-----*-----)
3	53	3.4151	1.0272	(-----*-----)	(-----*-----)
4	37	3.9730	1.0668	(-----*-----)	(-----*-----)
5	19	3.9474	0.7050	(-----*-----)	(-----*-----)
-----+-----+-----+-----					
Pooled StDev = 0.9727					
3.00 3.60 4.20 4.80					

**Table 4. SEAL Officer Survey One-way Variance for Question 6**

Lieutenant Commanders and Commanders responded that they were prepared to utilize organic Naval Special Warfare assets. The larger number of Lieutenants (O-3's), however, did not feel as strong about their preparedness. This is an interesting indicator since O-3's hold assignments as platoon commanders. The SEAL officer survey did not distinguish between officers who have completed their platoon commander tour to those who have not. Question 6a, asking how training for NSWTU assets was received (either on-the-job or formal), also resulted in a  $p$ -value  $< 0.10$ . Thus, the more senior the officer, the stronger the feeling that training had been on-the-job.



Analysis of Variance for 6a					
Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Rank	4	7.865	1.966	2.22	0.071
Error	119	105.385	0.886		
Total	123	113.250			
Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on Pooled StDev					
Level	N	Mean	StDev		
1	4	3.5000	1.9149	(-----*-----)	
2	10	3.8000	1.1353	(-----*-----)	
3	53	4.2453	0.9589	(---*--)	
4	38	4.2368	0.8833	(---*--)	
5	19	4.6842	0.5824	(-----*-----)	
-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----					
Pooled StDev = 0.9411 2.80 3.50 4.20 4.90					

**Table 5. SEAL Officer Survey One-way Variance for Question 6A**

Questions 18g, (h), and (i) all had  $p$ -value  $< 0.10$ . Question 18g dealt with joint doctrine. And 18h covered preparedness in national security affairs and the national security decision process. Finally, 18i covered theater planning. In each case, the more senior the officer, the more prepared he felt. This is a direct result of varied experience, exposure to commands and staff, and longer time in the service. The median for all three subjects, however, remained at 3—indicating much room for improvement.

## 2. Median and Mode Analysis

Given the five-point response scale, any response with a median  $\leq 2$  was considered an area requiring immediate attention. A majority of these items came in the evaluation of junior officers by senior officers. Survey Question 23, with sub-questions (a) through (k) asked officers (O-4 and O-5) the following: “The officers under my command (platoon/task unit/squadron) are (were) prepared to go to war in the following areas.” Those subjects (a) through (k) were the same educational domain as Question 18. Those responses with a median or 2 or less are as follows:

- 23d, information and net warfare. Median = 2.
- 23e, psychological warfare. Median = 2.
- 23h, national security affairs and national security decision process. Median = 2.



- 23i, theater planning. Median = 2
- 23k, civil affairs. Median = 2.

Question 18e (psychological operations), posed to all ranks, also resulted in a median value of 2. As with the subjects with low *p* values, this median analysis provides another way to consider which subject matters have room for improvement in the Naval Special Warfare officer community. Attention, however, must also be considered for medians of 3. Since the response “neither agree or disagree” could have different meanings to different people, the author decided to focus solely on responses with a median of 2 or less. Future goals could focus on raising all responses to a median or 4 or higher. Only through proper SEAL education, training, and preparedness can this happen. In addition, it is crucial that areas in which officers felt prepared must not be curtailed to address shortfalls. Those subjects that reported proper training and education must be maintained.

In addition to the median analysis, the mode was also a significant factor in analysis. The mode, the most frequent response, would not be pulled up or down by a larger number of extreme end-responses. The mode is important, however, because it demonstrates trends not seen in the median. Five subject matters had a mode  $\leq 2$ :

- 7, adjacent unit coordination and deconfliction. Mode = 2.
- 12, other government agency integration. Mode = 2.
- 18d, information and net warfare. Mode = 2.
- 18h, national security affairs and national security decision process. Mode = 2.
- 23g, joint doctrine. Mode = 2.

Not surprisingly, these subjects remain a common theme in both the SEAL officer survey and the JSOU (2005) report regarding SOF officer education. This fact indicates that SOF operators surveyed in 2005 mirror the sentiments of SEAL



officers surveyed in 2007. Therefore, many of the areas that required attention in 2005 still exist today in the Naval Special Warfare Community.

### **3. On-the-job versus Formal Median Analysis**

The tactical domain with amplifying information (questions with “a” and “b” follow-on questions) asked (a) how training was received, as well as (b) how the respondent thinks training should be received. Answers that had a  $\Delta$  between the medians indicated areas in which the SEAL officer corps believed training and education should involve more or less formal instruction. In this case, all subjects with  $\Delta$ ’s (regarding formal versus on-the-job training) indicated a desire for additional formal instruction vice additional on-the-job instruction. In the fifteen questions between and including 3a/3b and 17a/17b, nine of the response pairs indicated that the subject in question was learned 100% on-the-job (a median of 5) though the respondent felt that the subject should be learned with 50% on-the-job experience and 50% formal instruction (a median of 3). These nine subjects had a median difference of 2, from 5 to 3. Although three additional subjects (4, 9, and 13) had (a) medians of 4 with (b) medians of 3, this analysis focuses on the nine subjects with the greatest differences. Subjects with a 5 to 3 median drop included:

- 6, tactical employment of organic NSWTU assets.
- 7, adjacent unit coordination and deconfliction.
- 8, liaison skills to conventional and SOF staffs.
- 10, technical knowledge of joint supporting assets.
- 11, combat advising and foreign internal defense.
- 12, other government agency integration.
- 15, sniper and counter-sniper employment.
- 16, ground force commander roles and responsibilities.
- 17, integration of special activities.



These nine subjects indicate room for improvement should a SEAL professional military education program be devised.

#### 4. Correlation Analysis

Correlation is the measure of the linear relationship among the variables. If the correlation was greater than 0.70 then it was considered a strong linear relationship. If the correlation was between 0.50 and 0.70 then the relationship was moderate. Correlations less than 0.50 were weak relationships. When analyzed using a correlation matrix with MINITAB (1998), certain subject areas showed linkages that reflected relationships between areas of interest. More specifically, subjects in the “tactical” domain showed moderate correlations within themselves. Similarly, subjects in the “educational” domain also showed correlations among other “educational” subjects. No statistically significant correlations, however, were noted between “tactical” and “educational” domains.

The following table of correlations was noted within the “tactical” domain:

Correlation: Questions 6-8		Correlations: Questions 6-8 & 16-17		
Question	6	7	Question	6
7	.573		16	.508 .469 .459
8	.466	.768	17	.491 .538

**Table 6. Correlation Matrix for Questions 6 through 8**

Questions 6 through 8 tend to be associated with mid-grade officers in tactical situations. Question 6, tactical employment of NSWTU assets, and Question 7, adjacent unit coordination and deconfliction are naturally linked by the nature of the subjects. In order to properly employ assets, an officer must deconflict those assets throughout the battle-space. One of the highest correlations (.768) was observed between Question 7 and Question 8, liaison skills to conventional and SOF staffs. There is an obvious relationship between coordination and deconfliction and liaison positions. Many SEAL officers have filled liaison positions in some fashion, and the



liaison job description often involves coordinating and deconflicting SEAL operations with conventional or other SOF action.

Correlations: Questions 7-12						Correlations: Questions 13-16			
Question	7	8	9	10	11	Question	13	14	15
8	.768					14	.617		
9	.530	.539				15	.555	.488	
10	.552	.639	.446			16	.535	.557	.455
11	.478	.562	.482	.493					
12	.659	.626	.478	.655	.486				

**Table 7. Correlation Matrix for Questions 7 through 16**

Questions 7 through 12 represent subjects that deal with people or things outside of the organic Naval Special Warfare community, and, therefore, that show correlations. The following is a list of those subjects:

- 7, adjacent unit coordination and deconfliction.
- 8, LNO skills to conventional and SOF staffs.
- 9, briefing, communication, and public speaking.
- 10, technical knowledge of joint supporting assets.
- 11, combat advising and foreign internal defense.
- 12, other government agency integration.

It appears that anytime an outside entity is involved, those subjects tend to cluster together. This information would be useful in setting up blocks of instruction to demonstrate linkages between these subjects.

Correlations: Questions 18a-c		
Question	18a	18b
18b	.796	
18c	.566	.634

**Table 8. Correlation Matrix for Questions 18a through 18c**



Table 8 presents correlations noted within the “educational” domain. Questions 18a through 18c show the strongest correlation (.796) for good reason. There is overlapping subject matter in all three areas. 18a, guerilla warfare, often associated with 18b, insurgency and counter insurgency. These subjects often are taught in tandem. Additionally, 18c, terrorism and counter terrorism also is connected to guerilla warfare and insurgencies. Many argue that terrorism is simply a tactic involved in guerilla warfare and insurgencies. Regardless, there is an obvious relationship.

Correlations: Questions 18f-i Question 18f 18g 18h		Correlations: Questions 18i-k Question 18i	
18g	.681	18j	.504
18h	.558 .722	18k	.502
18i	.528 .703 .765		

**Table 9. Correlation Matrix for Questions 18f through 18k**

The correlations of 18f through 18i, presented in Table 9, represent operational and strategic mission planning normally associated with mid- to senior-grade officers. It is no wonder that these subjects showed some of the strongest relationships. The following is a list of 18f through 18i:

- 18f, military decision-making process.
- 18g, joint doctrine.
- 18h, national security affairs, national security decision process.
- 18i, theater planning.

Questions 18i through 18k describe subjects a SEAL officer may or may not be exposed to due to rank or specific experiences, and therefore may share a moderate correlation. Question 18j, SOF history and 18k, civil affairs, are subjects not normally taught in existing SEAL educational structures. Basic SEAL history is learned both at BUD/s and JOTC, but the instruction suggested by the researcher would be more SOF-focused than SEAL-focused.



If the Naval Special Warfare community plans to address educational shortfalls addressed in this thesis, these correlations represent areas that could be grouped together for maximum attention. Since much of the subject matter is inherently related, it makes sense to teach them together during any and all forms of formal education.

## 5. Selected Quotes

The third group domain within the survey was in short-answer format. A total of 15 pages of 8-point font, single spaced answers were collected and combined. Question number 19 asked, “If you could add additional block(s) of instruction, training or education, to a J.O.’s career path to better prepare him for combat, what would it/they be?” Some selected responses included:

- Mandatory formal training in Joint Doctrine (terms, organizations, sister-service capabilities, sister-service doctrine and TTPs) and MDMP.
- Briefing and communicating classes/Introduction into the interagency processes/Big Army/Navy/Marine tactics—joint tactics/Counter Insurgency tactics—big-picture process & goals.
- Send all JOs—after AOIC tour and before OIC tour—through the Army Maneuver Course or a like USMC infantry/officer advance course. Learn a different lexicon, develop maneuver distinctions, [and] develop lifelong/professional relationships outside of NSW.

Question 20 asked, “If you could add additional block(s) of instruction, training or education, to a J.O.’s career path to better prepare him for staff, LNO and eventual command position, what would it/they be?” Some selected responses included:

- Participation in conventional unit's CERTEX or similar exercises in a LNO/staff job. Even just observing how these units view different battlefield situations and SOF units will help when the JO is faced with working with or for these units.
- Be an action officer at an overseas unit between his AOIC and OIC [to gain] exposure to the staffs, LNO, and Joint work. In addition, you understand the role of the theaters and the mission.



- OJT: mandatory 90-day rotations to combat areas, NSWTUs, JSOTFs and JTFs.
- Immediate deployment to a combat zone! After SQT, all JOs should deploy to a SOTF in order to get hands-on training in a TOC. The skills and knowledge learned in such an environment is invaluable to a young officer's career.

Question 21 asked, "What would you suggest as "other" ways to educate junior officers in NAVSPECWAR community?" Answers included the following:

- Introduce formalized continuing education for officers as they go up the chain of command and better prepare them for different responsibilities especially in the joint environment.
- SEAL officer education and professional development should be continuous and constantly evolving. The SEAL community can take better advantage of JSOU and send officers to Florida or invite their MTTs to the Groups and Units for courses when SEALs have down time.
- The other services, though having large SOF communities, make education a priority and that is why Army, Air Force and USMC officers are better prepared for staff duty; the importance of which many NSW officers do not recognize because they are trying to avoid the staffs to stay in the fight to get screened. Many do not recognize the importance of the staffs in getting the equipment needed to do the job and fighting for the approvals to utilize the authorities we have been given.

(Note: A copy of the consolidated written responses can be obtained by contacting the author.)

## 6. Consolidated Written Response Information

As a whole, the written responses provided enormous amounts of feedback. Consolidated subjects from all three written responses maintained similar themes. From question 19 (asking for suggestions to better prepare a junior officer for combat), the most frequent response came in the form of a Platoon Commander or Task Unit Commander course of instruction, similar to the previously mentioned SEAL Lieutenants Career Course. Many suggestions recommended modeling the course after the Army's Career Captains Course or the USMC Expeditionary



Warfare Course. Other topics mentioned with high frequency included integration with conventional forces, joint doctrine, language and culture, liaison tours with units with high operational tempos, and attending preexisting courses at other service institutions. Question number 21, asking for additional suggestions to better prepare officers, garnered similar answers. A formal block of O-3 instruction topped the list, followed by temporary duty to deployed staffs and units, battle-staff training, mandatory diversity tours, JPME-1, and conventional and interagency training. A few responses indicated that nothing new is required or should be added to a junior officer's career. Some responses indicated that junior officers need more on-the-job training. But as a whole, however, most of the responses indicated that some form of additional instruction is needed to better prepare a SEAL junior officer for combat, staff, and command.

#### E. Data Review

Considering the nature of the written responses and the analysis of the survey data, it appears that there is both a desire and a need for more formal structure in the Naval Special Warfare junior officer career. A SEAL Lieutenants Career Course is needed to address shortfalls in education and to instruct officers in the complexity of the modern military environment. The following table is a combined list of nineteen subjects indicated by the SEAL officer survey that could be improved through more formal education:



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Mission planning at the platoon level</li> <li>– Tactical employment of organic NSWTU assets</li> <li>– Adjacent unit coordination and deconfliction</li> <li>– LNO skills to conventional and SOF staffs</li> <li>– Briefing, communication and public speaking</li> <li>– Technical knowledge of joint supporting assets</li> <li>– Combat advising and foreign internal defense</li> <li>– Fire support coordination and execution</li> <li>– Sniper and counter-sniper employment</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ground force commander roles and responsibilities</li> <li>– Integration of special activities</li> <li>– Psychological warfare</li> <li>– Information and net warfare</li> <li>– Joint doctrine</li> <li>– National security affairs and national security decision process</li> <li>– Theater planning</li> <li>– Language and culture</li> <li>– Insurgency and counter-insurgency operations</li> <li>- Other government agency integration</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**Figure 4. Consolidated List of Naval Special Warfare Officer Survey Results Indicating Areas of Improvement**

In addition to formal blocks of instruction, the written responses indicated that overseas staff deployment and augmentation is also a way for junior officers to gain professional experience and help put education into operational perspective. A combined and structured approach to education and professional development would greatly benefit the SEAL junior officer community.



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### III. Other Special Operations Forces Officer Education Background

#### A. Military Directives on Education

##### 1. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff *Instruction 1800.01C* (2005), entitled *Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP)*, describes the intentions and requirements for the education of US military officers. Paragraph 4a, the Chairman's Vision, clearly states, "PME-both service and Joint—is the critical element in officer development and is the foundation of a joint learning continuum that ensures our Armed Forces are intrinsically learning organizations" (2005, p. 1). Specifically, Enclosure A of the instruction states:

Professional development is the product of a learning continuum that comprises training, experience, education, and self-improvement. PME provides the education needed to complement training, experience, and self-improvement to produce the most professionally competent individual process. (2005, p. A-1)

The SEAL officer PME survey conducted in this study highlights the fact the Naval Special Warfare Officers receive a significant amount of on-the-job training and experience, while specific and structured education experiences throughout a SEAL junior officer's career are few and far between. Through the rank of Lieutenant Commander (O-4), required education in the SEAL community consists of JOTC and JPME-1. As stated, field experience and realistic training events are essential to the development of a SEAL junior officer. The *CJCS Instruction 1800.01C* (2005), however, dictates that formal education is a critical and required component for a well-rounded and effective officer.

*CJCS/ 1800.01C* (2005), Appendix A to Enclosure A, breaks down professional military education into five categories: First, precommissioning education received at institutions prior to becoming an officer; second, primary education that includes branch qualification and is generally received within O-1



through the O-3 ranks; third, intermediate education, usually received at the O-4 level; fourth, senior-level education for the O-5 and O-6 ranks; finally, the fifth category is designed for General and Flag officers for ranks O-7 and above (2005, p. A-A-2). Initial service-branch qualifying schooling is conducted at the primary level. For Naval Special Warfare, Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/s) School and the Junior Officer Training Course (JOTC) would be considered a branch qualifier and primary PME. In the primary phase of officer education, however, CJCS/1800.01C also emphasizes the education required for an O-3: "Service schools that have programs centered on pay grade O-3 officers will foster an understanding of joint warfighting necessary for success at this level" (2005, p. A-A-3). Naval Special Warfare, however, does not have a service school or institution for the O-3 level outside of the Naval Postgraduate School. Therefore, as stated previously, all of Naval Special Warfare's primary education is currently received at JOTC, prior to a SEAL officer's first operational assignment.

## B. Other Service Special Operations Forces Education

### 1. US Army Special Forces

A United States Army Special Forces Officer cannot join the Special Operations community until he has first completed at least one tour in the conventional US Army forces. According to a Special Forces recruitment publication entitled *Thinking About Special Forces? Answers to Often-asked Questions*, an Army officer wishing to apply for Special Forces could look to do so as early as his third year in service (2007, p. 9). He would, however, already have attended his basic branch officer training and the Captains Career Course as part of his professional military education prior to attending the Special Forces Qualification Course. These blocks would precede his selection into Special Forces, which would then be followed by 48 weeks of Special Forces training. The Special Forces Qualification Officer Course, called the 18A, is described in a Special Forces Qualification Course Fact Sheet (US Army, 2006, March) as follows:



Company A, 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. trains and qualifies officers in the basic skills and knowledge required to perform duties as an ODA commander with an emphasis on adaptive thinking and leadership which fosters critical thinking and creative solutions. This training also includes Special Forces planning and working in joint and interagency operations, engineer and weapons training, communications and medical training, special reconnaissance, direct action, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, and counterinsurgency operations. (2006, March, p. 3)

This preparation, consisting of an Army officer's branch qualifying school, the Captains Career Course, Special Forces selection, and the Special Forces Qualification course, would make him qualified to take command of an operational Special Forces team. This Operational Detachment Alfa (ODA) team is commanded by an Army Captain (O-3), and is equivalent to a US Navy SEAL Platoon Commander in relative rank, responsibility, and time in service as a commissioned officer.

Regardless of the content in the Special Forces officer selection and qualification course, a major contrast of Army Special Forces officers to Naval Special Warfare officers is that all of the Army SFOs have already completed a course specifically designed for Captains (O-3). According to Trice (2007) in an *Army Times* article, “[t]he Captains Career Course, previously call the Advanced Career Course, is about 20 weeks for active officers” (2007, p. 15). Though not designed for Special Forces officers, the Captains Career Course remains a single point of instruction for all Army officers—reaffirming basic military information, reiterating professional military knowledge, and focusing on rank-equivalent leadership and preparation for higher command and staff. “The course focuses on the skills and knowledge needed by captains to command company-size units and to serve on battalion and brigade staffs” (Trice, 2007, p. 15). Since the Army has been in steady combat since 2002—with the invasion of Afghanistan, then followed by the 2003 invasion of Iraq— “[t]he curriculum [...] continuously updates with lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan” (2007, p. 15). The Captains Career Course, though not the sole source of education for a Special Forces officer, remains a source of common ground within the Army. Senior commanders can hold certain



expectations when they know that all of their junior officers have received a specific level of instruction. “The CCC common core, called C5, becomes a requirement for active and reserve officers beginning June 1 [2007]” (2007, p. 15). The US Army seems to understand the importance of primary education (as directed by the *CJCSC instruction* (2005)) during the latter years of a junior officer’s career.

In addition to examining the required education of a Special Forces officer, another aspect necessary for this analysis is to consider some of the other beneficial, but not required, professional development schools the Army offers. Though focused on field leadership opportunities, courses like Ranger School and Path Finder School offer significant field craft, simulated combat leadership stress, and (when attended by members of other services) a unique insight into the US Army. Additionally, by participating in such courses, officers make personal relationships with service counterparts that will last throughout their careers and often beyond. Even the Army’s Infantry Officer Basic Course (IOBC) could be considered an educational option for SEAL junior officers to help them reexamine small-unit infantry tactics and fire and maneuver strategies.

### C. Joint Special Operations University

As mentioned in Chapter II above, the Joint Special Operations University 2005 analysis of education in the SOF community indicated many of the same problem areas noted in the SEAL junior officer survey conducted in this research. The JSOU report (Booz Allen Hamilton, 2005) indicated numerous areas that required attention:

In addition, through the survey and focus groups/interviews, study participants suggested numerous operational and strategic topics that were either not already covered in the PME system or, in their opinion, not covered well. The list of topics is quite large; however, several topics were mentioned repeatedly (see list below) and should be given priority consideration by JSOU for thematic content in future course development. They are consistent with the competency model’s illustrative behaviors. (2005, p. 40)

The list includes:



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Introduction to other government agencies           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Culture</li> <li>▪ Coordination with SOF</li> <li>▪ Resourcing and sustainment</li> <li>▪ Operations</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Logistics support to Special Operations</li> <li>– SOF integration with conventional forces</li> <li>– Practical JSOTF exercises</li> <li>– Battle staff operations in a joint/combined/interagency environment</li> <li>– Joint Force mission planning</li> <li>– SOF campaign planning and integration with conventional force operations</li> <li>– Art and science of vision and strategy</li> <li>– Theory and art of unconventional warfare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– National security and defense policy</li> <li>– National military strategy</li> <li>– Theater strategy and operational campaign planning</li> <li>– Joint conventional and joint SOF planning processes and systems</li> <li>– Terrorism</li> <li>– Global insurgency/global irregular warfare</li> <li>– Network operations</li> <li>– SOF effects-based operations</li> <li>– Joint, interagency, multinational capabilities and integration</li> <li>– Dealing with the press/information operations/strategic influence</li> <li>– Alternative futures</li> <li>– Operations in ambiguous environments</li> </ul>
--	--

**Figure 5. List of Topics that Required Attention—Suggested by JSOU Survey** (Booz Allen Hamilton, 2005, p. 41)

The comments in the SEAL junior officer survey written responses mirror the JSOU findings. The SEAL survey suggests areas of improvement include battle-staff training, inter-agency courses of instruction, coordination with conventional forces, technical and tactical knowledge of joint supporting assets, joint doctrine, and unconventional warfare, just to name a few.

Considering the “Late to Need” diagram, one of JSOU’s responses to the Booz Allen 2005 study was to create the Joint Special Operations Warfighter Certificate. Specifically, as indicated in Lt. Col. John Prairie’s (2007, April) *Tip of the SPEAR* article:

The Certificate is for SOF personnel in their mid-career. It is designed for those personnel preparing for, enroute to, or assigned to their first joint SOF headquarters at a theater SOC, the USSOCOM CSO or a component or joint force headquarters. The intended audience is Special Operations Senior Noncommissioned Officers (E-6 through E-9), Warrant (WO-1-4) and Commissioned Officers (O-2 through O-4). (2007, p. 47)

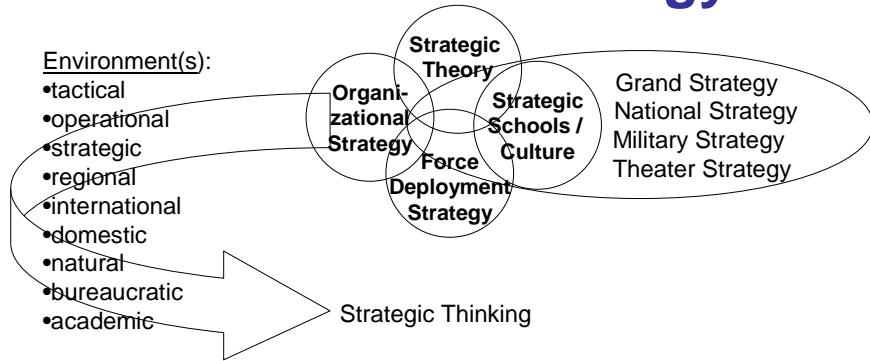


This program was designed to give tactical leaders desired education prior to command and leadership at junior officer ranks and on joint staffs. Special Operations officers have enormous responsibilities very early in their careers; however, as demonstrated by the “Late to Need” diagram, that education often comes after critical and often dynamic field experiences. In essence, the education comes too late. The JSOU warfighter certificate is earned after completing three, non-sequential, two-week modules—for a total of six weeks of instruction. Prairie (2007) describes the content of the three modules. Module one is Joint SOF Application and Strategy. Module Two is the Theory of Irregular Warfare. Finally, Module Three is the Joint Special Operations Collaborative Planning Course. The courses are designed to be reactive to student feedback, as the global Special Operations environment is constantly changing. This program is an excellent step in solving the education problem in the SOF community. Without question, SEAL junior officers would benefit from this program offered by the Joint Special Operations University.

A recent JSOU publication by Harry R. Yarger (2007) focuses specifically on Special Operations Forces Education. Similar to the goals of the JSOU Warfighter Certificate, Yarger’s text emphasizes the importance of education at all levels in order for personnel to understand environments and how they are linked. His “Realms of Strategy” diagram (below) is profound.



# Realms of Strategy



Strategic thinking occurs in all realms and there is a relationship among the realms and among the environments and between the realms and the environments.

**Figure 6. Yarger's Realms of Strategy**  
(2007, p. 16)

Many military officers try to categorize environments into isolated zones that they assume have little overlap with other environments. Junior leaders tend to focus, and are often instructed to focus, on tactical-level issues. Yarger (2007) argues that the tactical environment is simply one single environment connected to all aspects of modern warfare. A junior officer need not be a master in every environment, but he or she must understand the consequences of his or her actions across the military, civilian, and political spectrum. The JSOU Warfighter Certificate is designed to facilitate just that. Since formal service education often comes after a Special Operations officer has spent time commanding in the field, the Warfighter Certificate provides key insights at a junior-enough level that an officer understands the “Realms of Strategy” before field command.

## D. The Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey

Another opportunity for special operations forces to receive SOF specific education comes from the Defense Analysis Department at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. The department's webpage (2007) clearly describes the SOCOM sponsored special operations and irregular warfare curriculum:



The Special Operations/Irregular Warfare curriculum is designed to provide a focused course of study of the conflict spectrum below general conventional war. Graduates of this curriculum will possess a thorough knowledge of the broad range of factors involved in the planning and conduct of these forms of conflict and a detailed understanding of the role of special operations and related forces in US foreign and defense policy. The curriculum examines the sources and dynamics of inter-state and intra-state conflict; the challenge these forms of conflict have posed and are likely to increasingly pose for US security planning; the doctrinal and institutional evolution of the US special operations community; the recent history of political violence and "small wars"; the history of irregular warfare; and contemporary perspectives on low-intensity conflict resolution. The curriculum provides the graduate with a strong background in the areas of strategic analysis, decision making, organization theory, the technological revolution in military affairs, and advanced analytical methods. (2007)

This eighteen-month program at the Naval Postgraduate School is ideally constructed to address SOF-specific education for modern-day conflicts.

Consideration should be given to maximizing current SEAL participation in the Defense Analysis curriculum, as well as to expanding enrollment opportunities beyond what is currently available within Naval Special Warfare. An argument could easily be made that nowhere else in the military education system can officers receive such in-depth and SOF-specific focus.

## E. Precommissioning Educational Emphasis at Service Academies

### 1. United States Naval Academy

There is some debate as to the nature of precommissioning education at the service academies and its relevance to the current war in which the United States is involved. Specifically, the service academies provide the single greatest concentrations of future officers in one of three locations: Annapolis, West Point, and Colorado Springs. Therefore, it should be seemingly easy to develop warrior leaders prepared to engage in modern battle. The question remains, however: which battle? Andrew Exum's 2007 article in the *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy* entitled "Are US Military Academies Preparing Graduates for Today's Wars?" addresses this question:



Today, both the Army and Marine Corps demand officers with more language skills, experience living abroad in foreign cultures, and knowledge of not just modern technology but also the regions where they might be called to serve. The service academies' strong emphasis on math and science supports a vision of war still fashionable in some circles of the defense establishment, in which technology plays a leading role. But the wars that the United States finds itself fighting today are low-tech affairs. (2007)

In 2008, The United States Naval Academy will commission up to twenty-six SEAL candidates. This number could represent almost a third of the total SEAL Ensigns (O-1) reporting to basic SEAL training for that year. Therefore, nearly one-third of the SEAL candidates for 2008 will have the opportunity for SEAL-specific precommissioning education. Seniors at the United States Naval Academy receive their service assignment during the first semester of their final year. Therefore, during their second and final semester, seniors each take a naval leadership class that corresponds to their specific service assignment.

The current SEAL candidate curriculum at USNA is drafted by the resident SEAL officer (currently an O-3) assigned to the Naval Academy and is approved by the Naval Academy Professional Development Department. The current curriculum for SEAL candidates is described in the USNA NS425 Academic Year 2008 (Appendix 4) syllabus (2007), is drafted by the USNA resident SEAL officer (Lieutenant P. Logan) with no input from the greater SEAL community. Fortunately, despite the lack of guidance, the course is well-designed to give an introduction to Naval Special Warfare and the Special Operations Community as a whole. The SEAL officer assigned to the Naval Academy relies on past experience as he drafts the class content—content that must (in the current education continuum) fulfill the requirements as laid out in *CJCSC 1800.01C* (2005) for precommissioning education requirements:

Precommissioning education focuses on preparing officer candidates to become commissioned officers within the Military Department that administers the precommissioning program. The curricula are oriented toward providing candidates with a basic grounding in the US defense establishment and their chosen Military Service, as well as a foundation in leadership,



management, ethics, and other subjects necessary to prepare them to serve as commissioned officers. (2005, A-A-2)

Additionally, the *CJCS 1800.01C*, Annex A to Appendix A to Enclosure A specifically indicates that precommissioning education should include National Military Capabilities and Organization, as well as a foundation in Joint Warfare. The USNA curriculum, combined with Lieutenants Logan's NS425 (2007)—with 20 blocks of instruction and a graded examination—fulfills the precommissioning requirement for future SEAL officers. As always, however, there is room for improvement in the Naval Academy's SEAL candidate education process in order to maximize time prior to midshipmen commencing SEAL training.

The SEAL officer assigned to the Naval Academy receives very little direct input or guidance from the senior SEAL leadership community. What is being taught is totally up to the discretion of the assigned SEAL officer, regardless of his experience or background. In short, there is no required consistency between rotating SEAL officers that serve at USNA. Another problem with this curriculum is the lack of approved security clearances held by soon-to-be graduating midshipman. If seniors selected as SEAL candidates received security clearances prior to attending NS425, then the scope of the class could be widened—covering a broader range of applicable topics. Policy makers within the SEAL community have an opportunity to commence SEAL-specific education at the earliest possible time. Granted, additional investigation must be conducted in order to extend the same opportunities to SEAL accessions through ROTC and Officer Candidate School (OCS).

Finally, in addition to the formal instruction received by potential SEAL candidates, the Naval Academy often hosts formal and informal “career night” events, at which current SEAL officers have an opportunity to interact with midshipmen. These opportunities are predictable; however, they rely solely on invitations to current SEALs from the SEAL officer assigned to the Academy. That officer may or may not have access to or knowledge of an officer pool that could be better suited to address potential candidates.



## 2. United States Military Academy

Unlike the US Naval Academy, the US Military Academy does not graduate officers directly into the Special Operations community. All officers with aspirations for Special Operations must first be assigned and serve time with a conventional unit. After that, an individual may opt for numerous branches within the Special Operations community. Exum's (2007) article does not spare West Point in his criticism of the inapplicability of service academy education, given the nature of the modern threat:

But the challenge facing both academies today is not so much whether or not to remain engineering schools, but how to balance the practical skills that officers need on the modern battlefield—languages and cultural intelligence in addition to more traditional martial skills—with the academies' loftier goal of giving their cadets and midshipmen a broad “intellectual foundation” for service. (2007)

Interestingly enough, however, unlike the US Naval Academy, West Point offers a degree in Military Art and Science. The *US Military Academy Class of 2009 Department of Military Instruction* pamphlet indicates that cadets can choose one of two tracks within the Military Art and Science Major: Operations or Irregular Warfare. In the Operations track, cadets can take courses such as Military Communication or Combat Leadership. In the Irregular Warfare track, courses such as Special Operations/Low-intensity Conflict and The History of Unconventional Warfare are offered. Regardless of the selected tract, electives in the Military Art and Science Major include courses such as Counterinsurgency Operations, Korea-Vietnam Military Experience, and Terrorism: New Challenges, just to name a few.

## 3. Service Academy Summary

Since the US Naval Academy graduates future SEALs and US Marines alike, a major similar to the one offered at the US Military Academy would certainly be beneficial to a junior officer preparing for an overseas combat assignment. The fact remains that graduates of the US Naval Academy that are designated as SEAL candidates are immediately members of the Special Operations community. Their



education, both prior to graduation and throughout their careers, is crucial to their competent and judicious contributions to National Security.



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## IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

### A. Conclusions

#### 1. Need for Structured Education within Naval Special Warfare

Naval Special Warfare must formally educate SEAL junior officers to prepare them for the complex environment they will face. This research has shown specific educational shortfalls that require attention. Though SEALs continue to demonstrate excellent and heroic performance in command, staff, and battle, one facet of their professional development is missing—a crucial element that could better prepare an officer for a career in Naval Special Warfare. This facet is education. This thesis does not intend for Naval Special Warfare to simply increase an emphasis on education, but rather to set the standard for SOF officer education. No other SOF community takes in a vast majority of its officers at the O-1 level. Therefore, SEALs spend their entire career in special operations—affording more time for education. Yet, though other service SOFs can expect a block of primary education during their careers as junior officers to prepare them for mid-level command and staff, SEALs are offered none. Now, more than ever, such a program is needed for SEAL junior officers.

### B. Areas of Emphasis Noted by the Study

This thesis found nineteen subjects that require improvement with regards to Naval Special Warfare junior officer education. The findings, as previously presented in Figure 4, look similar to the findings from the JSOU (2005) report, and the reports thus serve to cross validate each other:

This table represents subjects that were indicated to show significant correlation, subjects that demonstrated an officer's desire for additional formal training and education vice solely on-the-job, and subjects that officer's felt under prepared prior to deploying to a combat zone.



## C. Recommendations

### 1. Complete Primary Education Block in Naval Special Warfare

This study recommends that the Naval Special Warfare community develop a SEAL Lieutenants Career Course (SLCC) in order to enhance the Ensign to Lieutenant (O-1 to O-3) Primary education block as prescribed in CJCSI 1800.01C. This program would be inherently connected to the existing SEAL officer pipeline and would compliment branch-qualifying education received through BUD/s, SQT and JOTC. After branch qualifying, a SEAL officer would then gain the operational experience and knowledge afforded during an overseas deployment as an Assistant Officer-in-Charge (AOIC) of a SEAL Platoon. After completing the AOIC tour, a SEAL officer would then be eligible to attend SLCC prior to assuming command of a deployable SEAL platoon. Specifics are as follows:

- Eligibility for SLCC includes BUD/s, JOTC, SQT and completion of tour as AOIC.
- Officer does not have to be in OIC tour or have orders to an OIC tour. An eligible SEAL officer could attend SLCC TAD during diversity tour after completion of AOIC tour.
- SLCC should be a mandatory requirement prior to deploying as a SEAL Platoon Commander.
- SLCC should be open to all service SOF officers with equivalent rank, experience, and job description in order to strengthen ties with SOF counterparts and gain knowledge from peers in different SOF occupations.
- SLCC should be succinct enough to address the 19 areas identified in this study. SLCC should be offered twice a year at the NAVSPECWARCEN and co-managed by the Center for SEAL and SWCC and the NAVSPECWARCEN PME office.
- SLCC would be a graded course with ranked graduates, providing continued feedback to the student regarding progress and retained information.
- SLCC should include an interagency and DoD tour to familiarize junior officers with the structure of the joint military process.



This recommendation includes a partnership with the Joint Special Operations University, the Naval Postgraduate School, and applicable service institutions for instruction, guidance and expertise. Though managed, scheduled, and directed by the SEAL community, the SLCC program would rely heavily on outsourced educators to maintain relevance and up-to-date information. Naval Special Warfare Leadership would use this course, as in the current Platoon Commander's seminar, to emphasize SEAL command expectations, ethos, ethics, roles and responsibilities. The curriculum of the program must be designed to specifically address the subjects indicated in the table above.

Commander Matt Stevens' (2007) thesis maintained a similar recommendation:

A long term proposal is to develop a career-level course directed and taught by organic NSW assets targeting SEALs prior to their platoon commander tours. Though not immediately feasible due to limited resources and organizational structure, it would be very possible to implement this concept within a year. (2007, p. 22)

The ability to stand up such a program in a short period of time is debatable; of more concern and requiring more in-depth future analysis would be the short- and long-term funding. The requirement of such a program is obvious. As CDR Stevens (2007) recommended, other service institutions could be relied upon in the interim to educate junior officers, however; given the operational tempo of SEAL officers, this research recommends that the SEAL Lieutenants Career Course be initiated immediately.

## **2. Take Advantage of Existing Educational Opportunities**

This study recommends that the JSOU Warfighter Certificate become a mandatory qualification for all officers prior to an assignment as an Operations Officer, Task Unit Commander, or Troop Commander. Specifics include:

- Eligibility for Warfighter Certificate modules should mirror that of SLCC, except that officers within their AOIC tour would also eligible.



- Courses can be taken out of order as long as all three are completed prior to above-mentioned assignment.
- The Warfighter Certificate should also become a mandatory requirement for all SEAL officers prior to assignment as an Operations Officer, Task Unit Commander, or Troop Commander.

### **3. Temporarily Assign Junior Officers to Deployed Staff.**

Many of the written responses to the SEAL officer survey indicated that experience on an overseas, operational staff was invaluable. Though probably best managed by individual unit commanders, every effort should be made to forward-deploy junior officers to staff positions under the leadership and direction of a mentor. Significant thought and planning should go into this effort, as it is detrimental to the community to place an inexperienced and uneducated SEAL junior officer in a situation in which he is expected to represent Naval Special Warfare and (more importantly) other operators in the field. Far too often, junior SEAL officers are placed in staff and liaison positions without proper preparation. The end result can have long-term negative impacts if that command or staff felt the SEAL junior officer was not up to operational standards.

### **4. Maximize Attendance at Naval Postgraduate School**

As of Fall 2007, seven SEAL officers are currently enrolled in the Defense Analysis Curriculum at the Naval Postgraduate School out of approximately 150 students. The unique, SOF-specific education opportunities provided by NPS DA are the only type or one of their kind offered to SEAL officers. SEAL junior officer would not have to wait to be an O-4 in order to attend Naval War College and could, in fact, receive orders to NPS during his prescribed diversity tour. The other career progression option is to attend NPS after an OIC or TUCDR tour. Additionally, JPME-1 is built into the system; therefore, joint education requirements are addressed in tandem with the NPS MBA program.



## 5. Formally Address Pre-commissioning Opportunities at USNA

The Naval Special Warfare community would benefit from taking a more active role in developing SEAL officers prior to commissioning. Specifically, NAVSPECWARCOM should institute a formal relationship with the SEAL officers responsible for the SEAL curriculum assigned to the United States Naval Academy to provide direction and assistance. NAVSPECWARCOM should provide representation at every officer “career night.” NAVSPECWARCOM should monitor the progress of interested midshipmen in order to ensure educational opportunities are taken advantage of prior to graduation from USNA.

## D. Areas of Recommended Further Study

### 1. Expansion of Branch Qualifying Training and Education

Further study should consider the impacts of SEAL junior officers attending either the US Marine Infantry Officer Course or the US Army’s Infantry Officer Basic Course after completing BUD/s and SQT. By including an additional block of small-unit infantry tactics amongst their peers, SEAL officers could benefit from a more solid base of training and education that would further enhance their operational experiences as junior officers.

### 2. Enlisted Education

Upholding the long tradition of SEAL officers training alongside enlisted counterparts, it is time for the Naval Special Warfare community to place a strong emphasis on enlisted education. The JSOU Warfighter Certificate is specifically designed for senior, Non-commissioned officers, warrants, and junior officers within the SOF community. An analysis should be conducted to determine if there is value in making the JSOU Warfighter Certificate a requirement for enlisted SEALs prior to assuming the position as Operations Chief Petty Officer, Task Unit Chief Petty Officer, or Troop Chief Petty Officer.



### **3. Distant Learning Qualification**

The Surface Warfare community has recently gone to a CD-based qualification system that requires junior officers to demonstrate a specified number of tasks, conditions, and standards as part of the surface warfare qualification process. Naval Special Warfare should look into the effectiveness and applicability of such a system to measure SEAL junior officer development.

### **4. Develop a System to Address Pre-commissioning Education Opportunities for ROTC and OCS**

Similar to the situation at the Naval Academy, officers that join the community from ROTC and OCS should have a structured and monitored accession process in order to ensure that all education opportunities applicable to the SEAL and SOF community are made available and are taken advantage of.

### **E. Summary**

The nineteen areas for improvement identified by this research will not be difficult to address with the right diligence, time, money, and effort. Most importantly, the SEAL community must maintain proficiency in the areas covered by this study that were reported to be doing well. SEALs today continue to go into harm's way on a daily basis. SEAL officers are expected to lead their men into combat. As important as battlefield leadership is the responsibility of a SEAL officer to relate those combat experiences to the broader and more strategic warfare continuum. SEAL officers will do their people a disservice if their combat efforts do not yield results beyond what is achieved on the battlefield. Simply maneuvering a SEAL unit across the landscape is no longer the benchmark of a successful officer. Though he must be a master of combat leadership, he must be a warrior diplomat, an operational and strategic thinker and planner. He must also maintain the ability to communicate effectively with both conventional and other SOF assets. The current SEAL junior officer education process does not prepare a SEAL officer for those requirements. To suggest that SEALs receive all the education they need is to insinuate that there is nothing left to be learned. No one in the Naval Special



Warfare is prepared to make such a statement. SEALs continue to strive for excellence through diligence, innovation, and hard work. Therefore, there is a requirement for applicable and relevant education to better prepare junior officers. Clearly, now, more than ever, is the time for a structured Naval Special Warfare junior officer professional military education program.



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# Appendix 1. SEAL Officer Survey

**Introduction:** You are invited to participate in a study entitled *Structuring Naval Special Warfare Officer Professional Development Requirements* being conducted by Naval Special Warfare.

**Procedures:** Please be frank and honest. This survey should take no more than 15 minutes for O-1 to O-3's and 30 minutes for O-4's to O-5's. Space will be provided for additional written/typed comments. **There is an additional set of questions after the short answer for O-4's and O-5's.**

**Risks and Benefits:** This project does not involve greater than minimal risk and involves no known reasonably foreseeable risks or hazards greater than those encountered in everyday life. Benefits of the survey include a better understanding by the researcher of opinions and attitudes within the Naval Special Warfare community regarding Professional Development.

**Compensation:** There will be no tangible compensation provided for taking this survey. The results of the survey will be available by contacting CDR (ret) Brad Voigt at the Naval Special Warfare Center for SEAL and SWCC.

**Confidentiality & Privacy Act:** All records of this study will be kept private. No information will be publicly accessible which could identify participants. This survey will be identified only as a code number on all research forms/data bases. Any records of participation will be maintained by CENSEALSWCC for three years, after which they will be destroyed.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study.** Participation is strictly voluntary. If you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without prejudice.

**Points of Contact.** If there are any questions or comments regarding this project upon the completion of participation, contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Erik Jansen, Naval Postgraduate School, or researcher LCDR Thomas A. Donovan, Naval Postgraduate School. Any other questions or concerns may be addressed to the IRB Chair, LT Brent Olde, Naval Postgraduate School.

**Statement of Consent.** I have been provided with a full explanation of the purpose, procedures, and duration of participation in this research project. I understand how my identification will be safeguarded and have had all my questions answered. I have been provided a copy of this form for my records and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that by agreeing to participate in this research I do not waive any of my legal rights. This survey is anonymous and does not require your signature.

## Why the survey?

**Purpose & Background:** Purpose of this survey is to help determine where our community is excelling or falling behind with regards to officer professional development, specifically in two categories: training and education. The results of this survey could help shape a framework for professional development from tactical to educational, from ensign to admiral.

Every Squadron After-action Report since 2003 has listed Professional Development and/or Professional Military Education (PME) as a problem area. Usually the item is vague with little elaboration. This survey will gather information exclusively on Professional Development: Training and Education to allow a systematic analysis of what PRODEV and PME requirements should be focused toward NAVSPECWAR junior officers (O-1 to O-4).

**Wording:** The term "schoolhouse" will be used for education or training received at any institution or training command. Examples include, but are not limited to: Naval Special Warfare Center





5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**7. Adjacent Unit Coordination and Deconfliction**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**8. LNO Skills to Conventional & SOF Staffs**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**9. Briefing, Communication, Public Speaking Skills**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**10. Technical Knowledge of Joint Supporting Assets**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**11. Combat Advising and Foreign Internal Defense (FID)**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**12. Other Government Agency Integration**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**13. Fire Support Coordination and Execution**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal



**14. Organic/Attached Heavy Weapons Employment**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**15. Sniper/Counter-sniper Employment**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**16. Ground Force CDR Roles and Responsibilities**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**17. Integration of Special Activities**

5 4 3 2 1

a. How skill was obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

b. How skill should be obtained:

OJT **100 75/25 50/50 25/75 100** Formal

**18. I feel that I am (was) properly indoctrinated and prepared to go to war with knowledge in the following areas:**

<b>a. Guerilla Warfare</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>b. Insurgency and Counter Insurgency</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>c. Terrorism and Counter Terrorism</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>d. Information &amp; Network Warfare</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>e. Psychological Warfare</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>f. Military Decision-making Process</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>g. Joint Doctrine</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>h. National Security Affairs/National Security Decision Process</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>i. Theater Planning</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>j. SOF History</b>	5 4 3 2 1
<b>k. Civil Affairs</b>	5 4 3 2 1

**Short Answer:**

**19. If you could add additional block(s) of instruction, training or education, to a JO's career path to better prepare him for combat, what would it/they be?**

**20. If you could add additional block(s) of instruction, training or education, to a JO's career path to better prepare him for staff, LNO, and eventual command position, what would it/they be?**



- 21.** What would you suggest as "other" ways to educate junior officers in NAVSPECWAR community?
- 22.** If the community developed a Division Officers Course (pre-Platoon Commander), how long should it be? Highlight one:

Not Required   Less than one month   1-2 month   3-4 months   5-6 months

\*\*If you are an O-1, O-2 or O-3, you have completed this survey. Results will be presented to NAVSPECWARCOM by the Fall 2007.\*\*

**\*\*If you are an O-4 or O-5, please continue with the final two (2) questions.\*\***

**For O-4's and O-5's:**

- 23.** The officers under my command (platoon/task unit/squadron) are (were) indoctrinated and prepared to go to war in the following areas:

<b>a.</b> Guerilla Warfare	5 4 3 2 1
<b>b.</b> Insurgency and Counter Insurgency	5 4 3 2 1
<b>c.</b> Terrorism and Counter Terrorism	5 4 3 2 1
<b>d.</b> Information & Network Warfare	5 4 3 2 1
<b>e.</b> Psychological Warfare	5 4 3 2 1
<b>f.</b> Military Decision-making Process	5 4 3 2 1
<b>g.</b> Joint Doctrine	5 4 3 2 1
<b>h.</b> National Security Affairs/National Security Decision Process	5 4 3 2 1
<b>i.</b> Theater Planning	5 4 3 2 1
<b>j.</b> SOF History	5 4 3 2 1
<b>k.</b> Civil Affairs	5 4 3 2 1

- 24.** The officers under my command (platoon/task unit /squadron) are (were) indoctrinated and prepared to go to war in the following areas:

<b>a.</b> Fire and Maneuver (small unit tactics SEAL platoon and below)	
5 4 3 2 1	
<b>b.</b> Mission Planning at platoon level	5 4 3 2 1
<b>c.</b> Small Unit Tactics (SEAL platoon to Task Unit)	
5 4 3 2 1	
<b>d.</b> Tactical Employment of Organic NSW TU assets	
5 4 3 2 1	
<b>e.</b> Adjacent Unit Coordination and Deconfliction	
5 4 3 2 1	
<b>f.</b> LNO skills to conventional & SOF staffs	
5 4 3 2 1	
<b>g.</b> Briefing, Communication, Public-speaking Skills	
5 4 3 2 1	
<b>h.</b> Technical knowledge of Joint Supporting Assets	
5 4 3 2 1	
<b>i.</b> Combat Advising and Foreign Internal Defense (FID)	
5 4 3 2 1	
<b>j.</b> Other Government Agency Integration	
5 4 3 2 1	



**k. Fire Support Coordination and Execution**

5 4 3 2 1

**l. Organic/Attached Heavy Weapons Employment**

5 4 3 2 1

**m. Sniper/Counter-sniper Employment**

5 4 3 2 1

**n. Ground Force CDR Roles and Responsibilities**

5 4 3 2 1

**o. Integration of Special Activities**

5 4 3 2 1



## Appendix 2. Survey Results

Question Number	Response out of 129	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Standard P-Value <sup>3</sup>
1	129	2.2016	2	2	0.9793	0.556
2	129	4.2558	4	4	0.8318	0.934
3	129	4.4651	5	5	0.5869	0.785
3a	129	3.876	4	4	0.9763	0.332
3b	128	3.5859	4	4	0.9351	0.358
4	128	3.8984	4	4	1.0487	0.791
4a	129	3.8372	4	4	0.8731	0.059
4b	129	3.1705	3	3	0.7616	0.043
5	126	4.1587	4	4	0.7737	0.395
5a	129	4.0388	4	4	0.922	0.156
5b	127	3.5039	4	4	0.7546	0.464
6	124	3.6935	4	4	0.9892	0.076
6a	125	4.248	5	5	0.9559	0.071
6b	126	3.3651	3	3	0.7332	0.534
7	127	2.976	3	2	1.172	0.657
7a	127	4.6457	5	5	0.7403	0.145
7b	127	3.2126	3	3	0.752	0.917
8	127	3.102	3	4	1.194	0.515
8a	129	4.7132	5	5	0.7725	0.168
8b	129	3.2558	3	3	0.8128	0.819
9	127	3.7559	4	4	1.0135	0.305
9a	129	4.0775	4	5	0.9405	0.172
9b	129	3.0388	3	3	0.7438	0.09
10	127	3.1575	3	4	1.1228	0.196
10a	129	4.2868	5	5	0.9202	0.473
10b	129	3	3	3	0.75	0.408
11	126	3.167	3	4	1.178	0.242

<sup>3</sup> p-values < 0.10 are highlighted



11a	127	4.7165	5	5	0.6286	0.14
11b	127	3.4488	3	3	0.6867	0.104
12	126	2.754	3	2	1.288	0.231
12a	126	4.4841	5	5	0.9528	0.026
12b	127	3.2047	3	3	0.6707	1
13	127	3.3386	4	4	1.1071	0.4
13a	129	3.9922	4	5	1.0193	0.003
13b	129	3.2016	3	3	0.7539	0.079
14	127	3.5512	4	4	1.0962	0.482
14a	128	4.0469	4	5	1.093	0.12
14b	128	3.4766	4	4	0.763	0.313
15	127	3.504	4	4	1.154	0.162
15a	125	4.256	5	5	0.9747	0.672
15b	127	3.4567	3	4	0.71	0.224
16	126	3.524	4	4	1.15	0.753
16a	127	4.4173	5	5	0.8493	0.14
16b	127	3.378	3	3	0.7119	0.055
17	127	3.134	3	4	1.164	0.489
17a	127	4.3228	5	5	1.0303	0.003
17b	127	3.1654	3	3	0.6757	0.321
18a	129	3.3643	4	4	1.1315	0.995
18b	129	3.2946	3	4	1.0854	0.816
18c	129	3.6047	4	4	1.0564	0.22
18d	129	2.5659	3	2	1.0595	0.691
18e	129	2.4651	2	2	1.0387	0.763
18f	129	3.535	4	4	1.139	0.752
18g	128	3.117	3	4	1.195	0.055
18h	129	2.969	3	2	1.218	0.014
18i	129	2.953	3	4	1.198	0.022
18j	129	3.5039	4	4	1.0087	0.627
18k	128	2.5859	3	3	1.1261	0.404
22	126	2.8095	3	3	0.8071	0.25
23a	55	2.964	3	4	1.071	0.732



23b	55	2.945	3	3	1.026	0.778
23c	55	3.527	4	4	1.136	0.462
23d	55	2.309	2	2	0.92	0.732
23e	55	2.091	2	2	0.888	0.473
23f	53	3.113	3	4	0.934	0.751
23g	55	2.618	3	2	1.009	0.079
23h	55	2.345	2	2	1.004	0.336
23i	53	2.453	2	2	1.011	0.601
23j	55	3.018	3	3	0.991	0.452
23k	55	2.182	2	2	0.884	0.886
24a	55	4.4	5	5	0.83	0.249
24b	55	4.036	4	4	0.942	0.111
24c	55	4.273	4	4	0.781	0.514
24d	54	3.87	4	4	0.891	0.644
24e	55	3.182	3	3	1.02	0.672
24f	54	2.907	3	3	1.033	0.836
24g	55	3.364	3	4	1.025	0.568
24h	53	2.943	3	4	1.008	0.773
24i	55	3	3	3	0.981	0.776
24j	54	2.611	3	3	0.998	0.65
24k	55	3.273	4	4	0.99	0.607
24l	54	3.611	4	4	0.92	0.671
24m	54	3.796	4	4	0.898	0.367
24n	55	3.473	4	4	1.034	0.783
24o	55	2.945	3	3	1.044	0.781



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## Appendix 3. NAVSPECWARCOM Survey Message

FM COMNAVSPECWARCOM CORONADO CA//N3/5//  
TO AIG 11370  
BT  
UNCLAS //N03000//  
MSGID/GENADMIN/COMNAVSPECWARCOM/- /MAY//  
SUBJ/OFFICER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SURVEY//  
POC/BRAD VOIGT/CIV/CENSEALSWCC/LOC:N3/TEL:619 437-2347//  
POC/THOMAS DONOVAN/LCDR/NAVPOSTGRAD SCHOOL/LOC:MONTEREY CA  
/EMAIL:TADONOVANPNS.EDU//  
POC/MCMAHON/CDR/COMNAVSPECWARCOM/LOC:CORONADO CA/TEL:619 437-3195//  
RMKS/  
1. IRT NUMEROUS NSW AFTER ACTION REPORTS WHICH HAVE CITED  
JUNIOR OFFICER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS AN AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT,  
NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND WILL EXPLORE THE CREATION OF A  
PROFESSIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT COURSE FOR LT'S (O-3). FORCE INPUT  
IS ESSENTIAL TO COURSE CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT.  
2. REQUEST COMMANDING OFFICERS ENCOURAGE ASSIGNED SEAL OFFICERS  
(O-1 THROUGH O-5) TO COMPLETE SUBJ SURVEY NLT 01JUL 07. FOLLOWING  
THREE METHODS FOR COMPLETION OF SURVEYS ARE AVAILABLE.  
A. LIVE SURVEY: THE SURVEY AUTHOR (LCDR THOMAS DONOVAN) WILL TRAVEL  
TO LITTLE CREEK, DAM NECK, PEARL HARBOR AND CORONADO ON BELOW DATES  
TO PRESENT THE SURVEY TO EVERY SEAL TEAM WARDROOM IN A LIVE FORMAT.  
DURING THESE VISITS, VERBAL FEEDBACK, ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, AND IDEAS  
WILL BE ENCOURAGED.  
(1) PEARL HARBOR - 24 AND 25 MAY  
(2) CORONADO - 7 AND 8 JUNE  
(3) LITTLE CREEK - 11 AND 12 JUNE  
(4) DAM NECK - 11 AND 12 JUNE  
B. INTERACTIVE ON-LINE SIPRNET SURVEY: OFFICERS CAN TAKE THE SURVEY  
ONLINE AT [HTTPS://CENSEALSWCC.NAVSOC.SOCOM.SMIL.MIL](https://CENSEALSWCC.NAVSOC.SOCOM.SMIL.MIL). THE SURVEY IS  
LOCATED UNDER "OFFICER PRODEV SURVEY" BUTTON.  
C. NKO DOWNLOAD AND E-MAIL: OFFICERS CAN DOWNLOAD THE SURVEY AT  
[HTTPS://WWW.NKO.NAVY.MIL](https://WWW.NKO.NAVY.MIL). THE SURVEY IS LOCATED UNDER "OFFICER  
PRODEV SURVEY" BUTTON. ONCE COMPLETED, E-MAIL THE SURVEY TO  
CENSEALSWCC-HELPDESK@NAVSOC.SMIL.MIL.  
3. SURVEY RESULTS WILL BE USED TO DETERMINE WHERE NSW STANDS IN  
PROFESSIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF O-3'S AND AID IN DEVELOPMENT OF A  
COURSE THAT ADVANCES THE NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE PROFESSION OF ARMS.//  
BT  
#0242



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## Appendix 4. IRB Approval Letter



### Naval Postgraduate School Institutional Review Board (IRB)

10-May-07

**From:** LT Brent Olde, Ph.D.  
**To:** Erik Jansen, Senior Lecturer  
LCDR Thomas A. Donovan

**Subject:** YOUR PROJECT: STRUCTURING NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE OFFICER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

1. The NPS IRB is pleased to inform you that the NPS Institutional Review Board has approved your project (NPS IRB# NPS20070072).
2. The NPS IRB was originally certified by BUMED on 26 July 2002 and has been re-certified until 31 July 2007.
3. This approval is valid for one year from this date. Please submit a copy of all records and consent forms to the Research and Sponsored Programs Office (Laura Ann Ikner-Price, Halligan Hall, Room 201B) at the conclusion of this project.
4. If your protocol changes at any time, you will need to resubmit your project proposal to the NPS IRB.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brent Olde'.

Lt Brent Olde, Ph.D.  
Chair  
NPS Institutional Review Board



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# Appendix 5. NS425 Syllabus

## NS425 AY2008

## NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE OFFICER PRACTICUM TOPICS

- 1 Course Introduction and Introduction to Naval Special Warfare Community
- 2 PPT's "NSW Command Structure"
- 3 Decision Making for JO (articles)  
-TDG #1
- 4 Administrative Requirements for junior officers (Orders, PPT, Awards, Evals/Fitreps, Naval Writing Guide, Pay, Travel Claims), Officer Resources (Bupers, DFAS, NKO)
- 5 NSW Officer Lessons Learned (guest speaker, TBD)
- 6 Officer and Chief Relationships, role of JO, unit dynamics
- 7 SHOOT-NSW Weaponry Introduction/Range Day
- 8 MOVE-Navigation Fundamentals—Sea/Land/GPS, NSW Asset
- 9 COMMUNICATE-Theory
- 10 Medical—Health, nutrition, combat care
- 11 DOD Areas of Operations, Geography
- 12 Mission Planning, Tasking for Pre-BUD/S Screener  
-TDG #2
- 13 Tasking for Spec Ops History Research Paper and Presentation, Midterm Quiz (Geography, NSW Org, Admin, Shoot, Move, Communicate, etc...),
- 14 NSW Officer Lessons Learned (guest speaker TBD)
- 15 Public Speaking lesson/practical
- 16 Pre BUD/S Screener Brief/Execution
- 17 Spec Ops History Research presentation
- 18 Spec Ops History Research presentation
- 19 Spec Ops History Research presentation
- 20 Spec Ops History Research presentation, Course Wrap-up
- 21 Final Exam (Summary of case studies/lessons learned, mission planning.)



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# 2003 - 2008 Sponsored Research Topics

## Acquisition Management

- Software Requirements for OA
- Managing Services Supply Chain
- Acquiring Combat Capability via Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)
- Knowledge Value Added (KVA) + Real Options (RO) Applied to Shipyard Planning Processes
- Portfolio Optimization via KVA + RO
- MOSA Contracting Implications
- Strategy for Defense Acquisition Research
- Spiral Development
- BCA: Contractor vs. Organic Growth

## Contract Management

- USAF IT Commodity Council
- Contractors in 21st Century Combat Zone
- Joint Contingency Contracting
- Navy Contract Writing Guide
- Commodity Sourcing Strategies
- Past Performance in Source Selection
- USMC Contingency Contracting
- Transforming DoD Contract Closeout
- Model for Optimizing Contingency Contracting Planning and Execution

## Financial Management

- PPPs and Government Financing
- Energy Saving Contracts/DoD Mobile Assets
- Capital Budgeting for DoD
- Financing DoD Budget via PPPs
- ROI of Information Warfare Systems
- Acquisitions via leasing: MPS case
- Special Termination Liability in MDAPs



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## **Human Resources**

- Learning Management Systems
- Tuition Assistance
- Retention
- Indefinite Reenlistment
- Individual Augmentation

## **Logistics Management**

- R-TOC Aegis Microwave Power Tubes
- Privatization-NOSL/NAWCI
- Army LOG MOD
- PBL (4)
- Contractors Supporting Military Operations
- RFID (4)
- Strategic Sourcing
- ASDS Product Support Analysis
- Analysis of LAV Depot Maintenance
- Diffusion/Variability on Vendor Performance Evaluation
- Optimizing CIWS Lifecycle Support (LCS)

## **Program Management**

- Building Collaborative Capacity
- Knowledge, Responsibilities and Decision Rights in MDAPs
- KVA Applied to Aegis and SSDS
- Business Process Reengineering (BPR) for LCS Mission Module Acquisition
- Terminating Your Own Program
- Collaborative IT Tools Leveraging Competence

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